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The Presence of Materiality and Material Culture in H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*: Rethinking a Narrative Text as Constitutive of a Material World.

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Abstract

Within H. G. Wells's (1866-1946) short novel *The Time Machine* (1895) a peculiarly resonant sense of materiality is articulated. The novel can be defined in terms of the ways in which not just objects, but rather a more encompassing sense of materiality has been meticulously arranged so as to convey a detailed, familiar environment into which a fantastic element is introduced. This sense of a graspable everyday setting is dependent on a solidity of detailed materiality, as are the fantastic elements that disrupt them. This suggested quality of materiality and material culture relates not only to recognisably object-based artefacts but also to notions of selfhood. From this single text, I will attempt to construct a speculative notion of material culture, or rather, I will be analysing the presence of material culture and materiality, and attempting to build upon it. In this way, I will move towards the construction of a speculative notion of material culture, making the case for the novel as a valuable and privileged form as a generator of hermeneutic possibility.

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Introduction

In the final version of *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, Walter Benjamin recalls how he was able to stage an adventure within the confines of his own room through the exploration of his wardrobe. He would delve inside among the nightshirts and undergarments, until he was able to find and remove pairs of socks, rolled up and turned inside out. Each of these became for him a small pocket, which contained 'the little present'.¹ Benjamin describes first grasping this present within, composed of a woollen mass, and then unveiling and unwrapping the present as it is pulled out from within the interior. Disconcertingly, as the present was revealed, the pocket would, of course, disappear. Yet rather than linger on this often repeated process as a confession of a psychically revealing compulsion, Benjamin recalls this memory to demonstrate its pedagogical impact, and the importance of this odd game in relation to his thinking in later life. This present is not like a toy wrapped in shiny paper. but rather is the tangible sense that inside the rolled up sock, is indeed, more sock. Within the interior space of the exterior is something that is indivisible from exterior. This is not just an infantile aporia, but is, according to Benjamin, the means by which he learnt about how to practice criticism:

I could not repeat the experiment on this phenomena often enough. It taught me that form and content, veil and what is veiled, are the same. It led me to draw truth from works of literature as warily as the child's hand retrieved the sock from 'the pocket.'²

There is on the one hand a specificity of interior and exterior that inform this thesis, in part on the level of indivisibility of form and content, but also the thematising and enacting of a dissolution of boundaries. However, there is a more pertinent instruction in Benjamin's memoir. This is the not to say that an object should act as an illustration of discourse, but that the pleasure one takes in an object can embody, perform and instruct acts of critical agency.

My own object of illumination is H. G. Wells's (1866-1946) short novel *The Time Machine* (1895). The novel can be defined in terms of the ways in which not just objects, but rather a more encompassing sense of materiality has been meticulously arranged so as to convey a detailed, familiar environment in which a fantasy narrative can play out. This sense of a graspable everyday setting is dependent on a solidity of detailed materiality, as are the fantastic elements. This suggested quality of materiality and material culture relates not only to recognisably object-based artefacts but also to notions of selfhood. From this single text, I will be analysing the presence of material culture and materiality, and building upon it. In this way, I will move towards the construction of a speculative notion of material culture, making the case for the novel as a valuable and privileged form as a generator of hermeneutic possibility.

This thesis has emerged out of a process of thinking about artworks as forms of material culture. Implicated in this are considerations of a broader cultural and historical set of realms in which artworks operate. Simultaneously this process seeks to generate an understanding of material culture that may contribute to new ways of encountering artworks. This has led to a consideration of material culture from a vantage point located outside of, but looking inwards at, its more generally-accepted dominant disciplinary forms within anthropology, archaeology and museum studies. Therefore this is a project concerned with providing a new and hitherto neglected account of the notion of material culture, and sets out to expand the use and understanding of the term beyond its current definitions and limitations. Whereas the dominant uses and descriptive accounts of material culture as a form of knowledge and set of disciplinary concerns relate to the inalienable artefact in space and time – in particular one that is available through an analysis of its context through fieldwork – it is my contention that interpretations of phenomenological encounters with and manifestations of material culture should not be determined by an ontological privileging of physical objects.

While the disciplinary origins of this thesis can be located in a fine art context, the object of analysis can not. This standpoint, of being able to consider material culture from within a fine art context, is significant in that it has allowed a

process of analysis and reflection that while learning from the disciplinary frameworks that constitute the field of material culture studies, can enable a kind of cognitive audacity. I would describe this project as audacious in that it is defined as a discussion and analysis of a material world that is in fact constituted by a work of narrative fiction. Such a choice might also seem contentious for a fine art thesis. If any such contention exists, it is necessary to remember that this is not a thesis written in an art history department, but rather as a piece of research undertaken at The Slade School of Fine Art recognises the potential that the School's PhD programme enables for interdisciplinary approaches to the subject of fine art. In such an environment, where there is no concrete disciplinary form as such, it is necessary to acknowledge that the forms of knowledge that now (but not only now) surround and permeate artworks are in fact shared with and built upon a much larger set of epistemological fields. This speculative notion of material culture is then itself, I would suggest, made available as an interpretative context with which to think about not just artworks, but a more general and universal realm of material practice, objecthood, text, environment and constitutions of subjectivity. This thesis sets out to consider aspects that might loosely fit within the domains of art history, visual culture studies, anthropology and literary criticism. The overlapping use of these discourses fits uncontroversially within the general terrain of art theory, but it is my intention to carve out a particular set of routes through this amorphous landscape that could be mapped by an expanded and boundless sense of material culture.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first of these purloins material culture as a disciplinary form and reconfigures it as an interpretative tool, a hermeneutic device for criticism. Set out here is the intention to reconfigure a terrain, to move from an operation of criticism of artworks to criticism of forms of material culture. Material culture can be made to work as an interpretative tool through a specific act of critical reading. The specificity of the choice of Wells's novel - as the device that is used to employ material culture as a hermeneutic process - is attended to in Chapter 2. In considering *The Time Machine* through notions of text and context, the text is bound not only to the genre of science fiction, but more significantly, to traditions of utopian discourse. I put forward here that the novel's

articulation of materiality and material culture constitutes a very particular form of utopian object.

Chapter 3 focuses on the presence of bodies as forms of materiality and material culture. Working on the assumption that anatomically defined bodies are also social forms, and as much defined as within the field of the gaze of material culture as any other form or artefact, this chapter addresses the extreme and heavily coded forms of the Eloi and Morlocks - humanity's degenerate descendants in the year 802,701 - as corporeal beings. As forms of abhuman representation, they both conform to a loose generic tradition, and suggest radical new forms of subjectivity that are locked into Wells's allegorical concerns. The chapter also addresses the unstable body of the Time Traveller as a fin-de-siècle embodied subject thrown out of a normative context, and draws on a number of models in order to theorise its manifestation in the text.

Chapter 4 addresses the broad themes of time and temporality in *The Time Machine*. A number of different models of time and temporality from the novel make themselves available for analysis here. The manifestations of time and temporality are broken down within this chapter under the categories of Time as Medium and Evolutionary Time. The first of these relates to the shape and form that time takes as a substance to be traversed. This category also investigates the instrumental device of the time machine itself. Yet then there are forms of biological and social time, all of which are conflated and rematerialized within the substance of the text. These are addressed within the section on Evolutionary Time, and are read through the lens of temporality as it appeared as a Victorian discourse, with reference to the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford and the Crystal Palace, which together constitute nodes of intensity in a network of display, collection and spectacle.

Travelling in time, not in space, the protagonist of this novel never really leaves his home. Space – architecture and landscape – is composed of forms that are never exclusive or distinct. Rather the spatial constructions of the novel are blurred, infected, permeated, by temporally distant neighbours. Chapter 5 addresses the fictive space of *The Time Machine*. The grandeur of the future landscape is tempered

by an attention to modest detail, that contains the sense of space and all its artefacts within a framework that is peculiarly quotidian. This chapter also draws out the dominant characteristics of materiality and material culture in *The Time Machine* – determined by the very indeterminacy that characterises Wells’s use of spatial differentiation. The suggestive and emergent properties drawn out through the thesis, represented as overlaps and slippages between chapters, are addressed. As a project that generates its arguments, rather than mapping them onto an object, the prevalent tendencies of materiality and material culture as they are rendered in the novel, degeneration and uncertainty, are attended to. Chapter 6 functions as a coda for the thesis, moving away from the close and thematic readings of the previous three chapters, to consider the overall textual nature of this material world. The complexity of textual encounter is drawn out as the binding together of writing, material culture and utopian impulse, through the impossibility of sustaining any irresolvable oppositions between subject and object.

Chapter 1: Purloining Material Culture

The challenge of engaging in a discourse that concerns itself with artworks is one that has necessitated and fostered an interdisciplinary approach. This approach does not lack a history, or recurring points of reference, but it cannot be described in terms of a concrete disciplinary form, and is constantly reiterated in terms of a dependence upon a greater set of epistemological fields, such as was convincingly demonstrated by Victor Burgin in 'The End of Art Theory'. Burgin traces the developmental genesis of art theory and concludes that it is at an end.³ This is not because models of theory are no longer applicable, or that there is any sense, as recently suggested by Gavin Butt, that artworks may have passed through their useful encounter with theory,⁴ but because it no longer seems appropriate to confine the study of artworks to artificially narrow conceptual or institutional limits. Rather, the study of artworks:

now ranges across the broader spectrum of what I have called elsewhere the 'integrated specular regime' of our 'mass media society. 'Art theory', understood as those interdependent forms of art history, aesthetics, and criticism which began in the Enlightenment and culminated in the present so-called 'postmodern' era the *end* of art theory *now* is identical with the objectives of *theories of representations* in general: a critical understanding of the modes and means of symbolic articulation of our *critical* forms of sociality and subjectivity.'⁵

Burgin's account places artworks within a field of representation, which makes possible the conflation of forms and approaches at work in this thesis which is intended to work towards a critical understanding of a form of symbolic articulation – one that I would argue is itself a *critical* form of sociality and subjectivity. While the analysis of my chosen material world will not depend upon references to specific artworks, the process contributes to a more general theory of representation in which

artworks are situated. Burgin's account, based on lectures given in the mid 1980s, is twenty years old, but that it is not to say it is obsolete. Rather, it serves as a reminder of the terrain in which those concerned with interpreting cultural forms and artworks operate, and provides a call to action in response to it.⁶ Much has been built upon the moment of Burgin's assertion, or perhaps, copious wreckage has been accrued upon it.⁷ Nevertheless, as I shall discuss subsequently, if some relatively current debates are anything to go by, we may need to be reminded of some theoretical articulations from recent history.

Burgin asserts as priority the need to build forms of what might be called 'art theory'. This is more urgent and valuable than any apparent necessity to reiterate, negate, affirm, revise or expand a clear set of disciplinary interests or neglected topics. It is this approach that provides both motivation and methodology within this thesis: an expanded and hopefully innovative understanding of material culture, through focusing on a particular and distinctive novel to modify existing concepts of what might usefully constitute its qualifying forms. In doing so, material culture as an interpretative device can be brought into a more general field of expounding on, unravelling, performing and transcribing cultural objects: material culture can be brought into the discursive realm of art theory. In this thesis, the object is a novel. By implication, this can also apply to readings of artworks. Artworks make occasional contributions to the aggregation of this particular configuration of material culture.

Through a discussion of existing areas of relevant and overlapping forms of interpretation, I would like to suggest that this thesis about a novel is both born out of issues of material culture relating to artworks, and will ultimately prove useful in thinking about how artworks might be read as forms of material culture. As well as shifting the focus of material culture studies towards text and narrative fiction, this is a chance to reflect upon processes of interpretation which could apply to various forms of cultural object, in particular objects as complex, contentious and elusive as artworks. I would like to differentiate this project from any superficial resemblances to previous engagement with scripto-visual propinquities or comparisons. In particular, this has little to do with the essentially formalist critical investigations of

theory and art object undertaken by *Art and Language*⁸, and is distinct from W.J.T. Mitchell's often insightful reflections on image/text.⁹ While there is a useful emphasis in Mitchell's *Iconology* (1986) on the absence of an essential difference between, in particular, poetry and painting, there is no attempt in my thesis to forge any kind of unity between visual and textual signs, or to engage in an exegesis of the historical conflict between the two registers. Rather, my project offers forms of interpretation from across disciplinary boundaries. Yet I would also like to suggest that this project can bind such disparate forms through the bringing about of a generative agency within the framework of material culture as a space for engaged acts of reading.

The methodological possibility of an interdisciplinary approach that the Slade School of Art offers, in its remit to facilitate innovative contributions of research in both the theory and practice of art, was effectively realised as an outcome thanks to an interdisciplinary scholarship from University College London. This enabled me to spend a year as a guest in the University's Department of Anthropology. I would like to emphasise the need to acknowledge the significance of this department in developing the field of material culture studies in recent years. Of particular importance is that the department is home to the Material Culture Group, whose members, include Barbara Bender, Victor Buchli, Susanne Kuechler, Daniel Miller, Christopher Pinney, Michael Rowlands, Nicholas J. Saunders and Chris Tilley.¹⁰ During the research process of writing this thesis, and particularly during the period of my year-long scholarship, I had the good fortune to encounter the members of the group directly¹¹ and to learn from their varied approaches to material culture in person. Collectively, their work provides a broad scope, but it is always determined, and restricted, by a disciplinary understanding. As Bender suggests: 'where possible and appropriate, anthropological insights can and should move into the public arena (...) and we have the right and the duty to offer, if not answers then, at least, insights.'¹² The claims that this thesis makes towards an understanding of material culture certainly encompass 'insights'. Any sense of entry into an explicitly public arena are subservient to a need to consider interpretation and criticism of cultural forms, which in themselves, I intend to suggest, can be

motivated by and contributory to, forms of social engagement and responsibility, desire and hope.

The significance of the Material Culture Group in pushing forward understandings of the discourse cannot be overestimated. The activities of the group and those associated with it - particularly those who publish work, through the facilitation of the Group, in the *Journal of Material Culture* and through publishers Berg – offer a unique sustained and consistent set of engagements with the idea of material culture. This perspective privileges explicit accounts of material culture, rather than any texts that might suggest its importance through accidental association. Elsewhere, such an explicit emphasis is inconsistent and, unlike the presence of forms material culture, is not ubiquitous, as Michael Brian Schiffer demonstrates by his need to emphasise the need to address the centrality of objects and materiality. In *The Material Life of Human Beings*, he makes a case for material culture as an ontological primer of definitions of humanity: ‘*human life consists of ceaseless and varied interactions among people and myriad kinds of things*. These things are called ‘material culture’ or, better, artifacts. (...) Incessant interaction with endlessly varied artifacts is, I maintain, the empirical reality of human life and what makes it so singular.’¹³ Schiffer’s account is an attempt to think of artefacts as indispensable participants in forms of communication and behaviour. While acknowledging that forms of material culture have been attended to in respect to social actions, he argues that the study of artefacts as social forms is marginalised within social science disciplines, and that in terms of quantity of research, it is only within anthropology that it is recognised to any degree above a bare minimum.

Yet he suggests that even within sociocultural anthropology, the role of material culture within communication is not recognised: ‘If, as I maintain, every realm of human behaviour and communication involves people-artifact interactions, then *all* studies in the social and behavioral sciences ought to attend diligently to artefacts.’¹⁴ Schiffer is also critical of work that views forms of material culture as secondary objects or processes. In short, he objects to acts of projection. If I were to place this within the influence of the discussion of artworks, this is something akin to Yves-Alain Bois’ proposition to allow artworks to shape their own accounts and

interpretations.¹⁵ In order for a discourse on material culture to realise the interpretative possibilities of its subject, I would like to assert the need to resist imposing singular forms of interpretation upon objects, and to allow disciplinary and epistemological spaces to become manifest as conditions of the generative and interpretative possibilities of what might be called material culture.

However, Schiffer's study is somewhat limited in focus. This is in part due to his emphasis on social sciences in North America, where there is perhaps a disproportionately small emphasis on artefacts and material culture as forms of discourse in their own right. He also emphasises a 'rigorous study of artefacts'¹⁶, the model of which is based upon archaeological training. This is a limited understanding of how to conceptualise and read objects of material culture, one which this thesis collides with head-on. Schiffer's study is one that is concerned with how material culture must be acknowledged as a primary and central means of intersubjective communication. Yet, it is a literal understanding of how objects and materiality is always a part of, or generative of, forms of human communication. He fails to acknowledge the possibility that forms more generally regarded as communication, such as narrative fiction and text, might also be mutually constitutive of materiality and material culture. It is my intention to facilitate this possibility, through the action of renaming the objects and forms that are being discussed, as well as the objects and forms that constitutes the discussion. Rather than see artefacts as knowable only through an archaeological understanding, I wish to provide a new understanding of what might constitute an artefact – *that is a form of materiality that is experienced and manifested through text*. Through text, and in particular, through *The Time Machine*, material culture is both enacted as a substance through phenomenally embodied encounters with text, as well as through layered processes of codification.

While I agree that the field is still often characterised by work that is 'superficial and incomplete'¹⁷, Schiffer's account of work that constitutes a discourse on material culture is myopic and perhaps suffers from the presence of the same qualities. For example, he cites accounts of material culture that view the topic as one of many arenas in which meaning and identity are negotiated, but that privilege

culture over material culture, subordinating objects and artefacts to a cultural frame of reference. A specific culprit is identified as Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood's *The World of Goods*. Yet Schiffer fails to identify a significant detail in that work. In their introduction, they specify that what is really important about artefacts are their place in other forms of communication, their transferability to information as forms of intersubjective relations. This is what they describe as 'naming', in opposition to the 'proving' of actual expenditure, ownership, use and exchange of physical things and processes. Perhaps an even greater omission is Schiffer's failure to acknowledge any work published after 1995, or to recognise the work of the Material Culture Group, with the exception of a small number of works from the early 1990s by Daniel Miller.¹⁸ There is therefore no insight into Miller's suggested emphasis on a methodological approach to material culture that places a reading of an object above the mapping of an interpretation upon it.

Miller's approach to material culture is formative, both to this thesis and the general discourse. Miller argues, in a manner that is not dissimilar to Schiffer's call for studies of communication to recognise the primacy of artefacts, for the practice of a form of material culture analysis that is not reduced to the mapping of social models onto objects, or using materiality to simply reiterate singular arguments. Rather the potential is to be able to build on the presence of materiality.¹⁹ This use of material culture relies on a degree of specificity. Primarily this is defined by the choice of the material world to be analysed – in this instance identified by the selection of the single novel, the significant characteristics of which are addressed in Chapter 2. Within this object will be considered the specificities of the relationships that can be identified. In drawing upon the selected fictional work as the source, this is a material culture that is defined by a double absence. The first is that determined by historical distance, the other by its status as textual, manifested by acts of reading. An expanded understanding of material culture is required here, which does not rely on traditional statistical or artifactual analysis, and which can also be usefully conceptualised through the psychoanalytical rethinking of selfhood and phenomenally accessible, anatomical bodies, articulated by Judith Butler in which bodies themselves are read as contested sites.²⁰ I am indebted to the complex

articulations of this discourse, in which bodies, in any sense, cannot be anterior to the realms of material culture and notions of selfhood cannot be critically sustained as purely reliant on biological, rather than cultural, determinants.

Material culture itself is something of a borrowed term, removed from the disciplinary restraints of its anthropological, museological and archaeological context. Within that context, its use is generally defined by the evidentiary status of the object of analysis within a phenomenally accessible and statistically definable social reality. However, while taking place from outside of that disciplinary context, it is these dominant constitutions of material culture that shape my fundamental understanding of the term. This thesis is therefore an attempt to think through the idea of material culture and how it might be conceptualised not only as an interdisciplinary set of concerns, relating primarily to anthropological, archaeological and museological issues, but also as a more fundamental set of encounters and readings. I wish to undertake a specific analysis in order to explore and even invent modes of thinking about material culture which fall outside of the more conventional and stable forms of its discussion. In utilising the disciplinary codes of material culture as an underlying and enabling set of articulations, I hope to extend the reach of the term and its implied interpretative power.

A discussion of the presence of materiality and material culture in *The Time Machine* suggests an apparent difficulty, or at least incongruity, of approaching a novel as a material world, as one might identify, for example, a social group in a region of Papua New Guinea, or perhaps to read the text as if it were a set of specifically identifiable objects or structures that could be read within the context and use of a culturally identifiable group. In order to start to think this through, it will be useful to address a comment by Susan M. Pearce, whose museological work, in the form of both writing and teaching, has been highly influential to recent discussions of material culture. Here, she notes that in what she describes as ‘popular fiction’:

objects are not simply the necessary furniture of the story; they provide goals and ends, they animate the relationships between the actors, and they give

structure to the narrative and mechanisms to the plot. Equally, they give their own colour and tone to what is going forward.²¹

Despite a simplistic understanding of ‘popular’, this statement is nonetheless valuable in thinking through how it is that *The Time Machine* might be utilised as the source of a reading of material culture. The value of this statement is that it appears to recognise something of the very quality that I wish to identify in my selection of Wells’s originary and formative work of utopian science fiction. Not only this, but perhaps also there is something of this quality that resonates through its genre descendants.

Pearce’s own definition – made elsewhere - of the material world, referred to as that which is available to museums and subject to analysis as material culture, is so broad that it seems impossible to sustain her account of ‘popular fiction’, as it can in no way be limited to isolated objects:

The material world, that is, the world outside each individual, may be defined as including the whole of humankind’s physical environment, embracing the landscape, the air which is manipulated by flesh into song and speech, the animals and plants off which humans live and the prepared meals which come from them, our own bodies and those of other human beings. All of these are raw material capable of organisation into the kind of cultural construct which we call human society.²²

I do not intend to argue that this sense of the presence of material culture in certain works of formative science fiction is something that is absent elsewhere. More generally, the tentative implication, that through this thesis I would like not only to sustain but to amplify, is one that encompasses all forms of fiction to the extent that none might be excluded from the categorisation of material world. The nineteenth-century novel that perhaps best exemplifies this tendency is Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick* (1851). With its seemingly endless and exhaustive accounts it constitutes not only an encyclopedic realisation of the world of whaling and whales, but serves

as a vast and spectacular museum, leaving no detail unattended in its dizzyingly complete collection. Likewise, Émile Zola's *The Ladies Paradise* (*Au Bonheur des Dames*) (1883) reconstructs the radically new world of the late nineteenth-century department store in Paris, dramatised through people, objects and architecture as an intense point of articulation for capitalist modernity. This potential within narrative fiction was, I would like to suggest, recognised and exploited by Wells. Perhaps, as shall be argued subsequently, there is some play on Pearce's emphasis on the privileged status of material culture genre fiction in my reading of Wells. *The Time Machine* can be characterised as a work of fantasy literature, in the form of (arguably) the first work of science fiction, but also as existing very specifically within a tradition of utopian narratives. These are the terms that account for the function of materiality within the novel. Materiality is situated within, and enacts, a utopian discourse to constitute a textual encounter, which itself is bound to the phenomenally accessible material reality that constitutes the world of the reader.

Pearce is also able to provide a useful definition of what constitutes the (generic or possible) artefact of material culture itself. It is expandable to the extent that 'the whole of cultural expression, one way or another, falls within the realm of material culture'.²³ As material culture, this becomes potential museum material, as does a more conventionally scaled 'thing' or 'specimen':

Strictly speaking, the lumps of the physical world to which cultural value is ascribed include not merely those discrete lumps capable of being moved from one place to another... but also the larger physical world of landscape with all the social structure that it carries, the animal and plant species which have been affected by humankind (and most have), the prepared meals which the animals have become, and even the manipulation of flesh and air which produces song and speech.²⁴

This straightforward assertion is itself an announcement of conceptual and methodological possibility. Material culture, then, need not be reduced to the study of forms of architecture, visual arts, or moveable objects. However, if this is the

case, then it seems that exactly what might constitute material culture might still be somewhat vague.

In order to continue to think this issue through, it is necessary to concentrate as much on the mode of approach to material culture as on definitions of what the subject of analysis and scrutiny might actually be. One model to which I owe a significant debt, and will therefore here devote a sustained discussion to, is provided by Preziosi and Hitchcock in their study of the Bronze Age Aegean. It is of value here not because it asserts that objects have meanings, but rather because the discussion is of what kinds of meanings they have. Preziosi and Hitchcock write 'with the understanding that the visual and material cultures of a society (...) constitute forms of individual and social technologies or instruments for the active construction, maintenance, and transformation of individual and social realities.'²⁵ These visual and material cultures, as they are described, include what might be accounted for today in terms of art and architecture. Material culture, as it might be described, is therefore read as much as a set of active social processes as it is a set of objects or built environments. Although such things as objects and architecture may by the very things that are read in close detail, it is not a process of framing them as either reflection, trace or residue of social activities. Preziosi and Hitchcock also stress the need to question the sequential order of such an assumption, that in deliberately not reading objects as reflections of ideas, attitudes or mentalities is the asseveration that such acceptably social forms do not precede any form of material expression in which they are given long lasting form. Implied is a sense of mutual interdependence between on the one hand the construction of social forms and modes of identity and on the other forms of objects that do not only serve as representative shadows of the former, but are active forms of their constitution. That they remain after their living culture has ceased to exist is misleading if it gives the impression that they were not a living part of it.

The form of reading that Preziosi and Hitchcock adopt is not straightforward. Their interpretation of artefacts is determined by the view that they are 'as much instruments that function to fabricate and maintain social realities as themselves products of such ongoing and dynamically challenging realities.'²⁶ Their position is

situated between two perspectives of reading objects as surviving fragments of a past only available through the piecing together of various elements. One side of the division is determined by the assumption that an object's meaning is fixed as an imprint of the intention of its makers. These are likened to the physical and chemical properties of an object which are retained, fixed and readable. The task of the reader is then one of deduction and reconstruction of original intentions. An object of this kind of analysis becomes analogous to a 'text', with the use forming a 'con-text'. This object/context relationship is privileged, in this model, as the only legitimate source of its interpretation, which is to be executed by the relevant expert. The metaphor here is a distinctly modern one in which the object is analogous to a medium of communication. Ideas or values move from maker or maker's society through to an attendant viewer or reader. This is a model that also privileges the role and function of the trained expert who can stand as sanctioned interpreter.

Yet on the other hand of the division in which Preziosi and Hitchcock situate their own position is a mode of thought that might be held up as the opposite to the one just described: 'the notion that the meaning of an object is entirely or largely in the eyes and imagination of its beholders or users.'²⁷ This opposition is perhaps usefully understood in analogy to Kant's view the aesthetic interpretation of an object. The subjectivism that Kant introduced as formulated in detail was an important feature in his Critical philosophy, particularly in *The Critique of Judgement* (1790) and had been a strand growing in complexity and substance throughout his work, although the space between *Observation on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764) and *Judgement* represents a sharp u-turn in his opinion of the location of aesthetic judgement. His later work represents not only a relatively novel view, but a more fundamental paradigm shift. Kant's solution to the question of whether beauty is objective or subjective was to recognise the apparent phenomenal presence of beauty that belongs to an object, but also to recognise that a feeling of beauty is the sign of harmonious workings of the mind brought about through the attendant consideration of the object.²⁸ What I would like to suggest is that Kant's theorising of subjective judgements relating to the apparently objective qualities of a particular artefact or phenomenally accessible 'thing' serves indirectly

as the very model of opposition that Preziosi and Hitchcock wish to use to counter the contextual reading of an object's fixed and inherent meaning, and is even perhaps the very ur-form that makes such an understanding credible.

What is described here is a compatible and simultaneous plausibility of apparently antagonistic positions. The reading of *The Time Machine* that I employ here is one that is likewise situated between such two distinct positions; between that of considering the object or novel as a clear and legible text that can be attentively read and its meanings carefully reconstructed, and an imaginative and unexpected re-use of the original, that it is defined primarily in each form of use that it finds itself. Preziosi and Hitchcock describe this position as being made available by the relative permanence that artefacts display, or in this case the textual world of a novel:

(...) they remain to be used and reused, and thought about in potentially new and possibly quite unforeseen or unintended ways over time – unlike a spoken utterance, which materially disappears unless it is recorded.²⁹

It is the temporal endurance of things that allows them to be read outside of their original conditions, while still retaining varying degrees of that originary context and meaning. (It is worth noting here that this process is one that is not dissimilar to the role of the Time Traveller as interpreter of the future: an observation to which I will return subsequently.)

The mode of analysis that Preziosi and Hitchcock lay out here is one of fundamental importance, both in informing the study of cultural artefacts more generally and within the specific context of reading *The Time Machine*. It is one that recognises the limitations of adhering either to a pure model of holding that an object's significance is embodied within the object itself, or that it can only be found in the perception of the viewer. By granting that both seemingly irreconcilable positions are not only plausible, but necessarily compatible, their position allows for readings that acknowledge original intentions and function, while recognising the likely impossibility of any such meanings being fully reconstructed. Perhaps even

more significant is the facilitation of interpretations that are not only multiple, but perhaps conflicting and antagonistic. This position is one that is usefully contextualized by Derrida's description of authorship – discussed later in the thesis – which sees the reliance of any inscription of meaning through a medium upon a culturally specific system of language. This system cannot be dominated or controlled by an author. The attentive and critical act of reading, both as phenomenological and hermeneutic act, must therefore be one that looks for relationships between what an author does or does not command. It is reading, therefore, that enables the production of a signifying structure of interpretation around the object.³⁰

The scope of Preziosi and Hitchcock's analysis is one that encompasses what is understood here as material culture, but is perhaps significantly different to warrant an account of how I would like to diversify from their methodological position. They are concerned with the 'visual and material cultures of a society'. My contribution to the work already done here is to suggest that such boundaries may be transgressed in the attempt to think through the limits and possibilities of what might constitute material culture. Another point of divergence is the limit of what these terms might include:

The visual or material culture of the Bronze Age Aegean – and here a useful generic term might be simply the built environment – will be understood as encompassing the broad range of objects and artefacts of all kinds as well as their changing spatial and temporal interrelationships: pots, paintings, gemstones, buildings, furniture, graves; artefacts both portable and fixed in space and place.³¹

This valuable description of a given material world also opens up new possibilities in its focused specificity by suggesting its own restrictions. Again, I would like to work with such a boundary by imagining its exterior. Where I would extend Preziosi and Hitchcock's description further is to think of material culture as a realm where bodies and objects become entangled to the extent that thinking about one

necessitates the inclusion of the other. Alternatively, this may be accounted for by the inclusion of embodied subjects themselves within the field of material culture. It is this model of material culture that I will theorise through the presence of bodies in *The Time Machine* in Chapter 3.

Material culture can also be thought of as a means of thinking through a reconciliation of views on the relationship between past and present. Mark Leone rejects the view that the past is nothing but the creation of the present.³² Conceptions of the past are necessarily constrained through material culture, which in its archaeological form is the past that remains. For Leone, social systems exploit the ambiguous gaps left by incomplete evidence and fill these gaps with ideological messages that serve as forms of cultural reproduction, reinforcing and replicating the existing social order of the present. The presence of material culture from the past can serve as a counter to this process through being the past's active representative. However, one problem with this argument is that this distinction between present and past seems to naturalise the two as distinct and independent entities. In this model, the past is over-determined as both a historicised form, and an objective condition, of something that once was. The risk here is in ontologising archaeological practice as an disciplinary activity that is immune to the contingencies of a relativist framework. Implied within this risk, as a factor that I would like to propose and exploit, is the need for a certain built-in set of vigilant and generative perspectives in thinking through notions and possibilities of material culture.

The disciplinary history of material culture as a definable field of study is relatively short, and has somewhat unclear origins traceable to the nineteenth century, when it became a fundamental element of anthropology. The paths of these ideas were bound to the extent that by the later years of the century, it was almost impossible to separate the two.³³ The narrating of a strictly rendered disciplinary history is perhaps impossible, and the limitations of material culture as an actual contained discipline are permeable to the extent that they are left as nothing but the ephemeral likenesses of boundaries. Yet the term itself, and its adherence to anthropological and archaeological practices, at least seems to have a recorded first

appearance. According to Victor Buchli, despite the murky origins of the term, there is a reference in the Oxford English Dictionary made in 1843 on the 'material civilization' of Mexico.³⁴ This sense of the term referred to a specialised relationship with objects and materiality, one that flourished in museums in Europe and America. Yet its implications and influences were extensive. The study of material culture had a coldly functional edge, in that it was employed as a device with which to measure the degrees of technological and social sophistication of given groups, which could then be placed within evolutionary hierarchies. Invariably European society served as the apex in these schemes, with hunter-gatherer groups at the bottom. This both justified imperial expansion and intervention, as well as serving the universality of Enlightenment liberalism:

(...) which advocated the universality of human experience and justice. The various 'uncivilized' peoples of the world were all subject to the same technical and social processes albeit at different levels, thereby ensuring European dominance. All of humanity's inventions and institutions could be used as an indicator of this inexorable dynamic of inclusive progress.³⁵

Also implied is a temporal distortion, the notion that to look down this hierarchy was to look back at oneself at a past moment, that the hunter gatherer was at a prehistoric stage of development, and so was a representative of an early moment of human development. The past of an essentially European humanity could be found in the material cultures that made up the rest of the world.

While the first stage of modern material culture was shaped as an evolutionary and specifically temporal discipline, it is worth thinking about some of the deeper origins of pseudo scientific intellectual traditions that may be linked to the form as a general discipline. The general roots of anthropology could be located within pre-Socratic thought. In the cosmological speculations of the origins of nature, materialistic causes were often presented in favour of supernatural ones. Rather than conforming to religious mythology as the explanatory narratives of the world, pre-Socratic thought recognised the origin of the world as something that

could be accounted for by the world itself, and therefore also implicated a connection between all the material things within it; including people. Thales, the Greek philosopher, suggested in the 7th century B.C., that water was the source of all matter in the world, while Anaximander, one of his students disagreed and speculated that rather than coming from a known material, everything in the universe had its physical origins in some unknown, boundless, yet undifferentiated material. Democritus suggested that both people's bodies and their behaviour were derived from and influenced by changes in the shape and velocity of universal particles – atoms. Centuries later, Epicurus and Empedocles sustained an atomic theory, but one that saw people composed out of atoms, which were returned to nature after death.

These approaches suggest a more long lasting and fundamental set of concerns that are not solely defined in terms of such a negative set of conditions as characterised nineteenth-century material culture as an indicator of progress. Rather, there is a recognisable sense of urgency in these attempts to think through the physical conditions of things/subjects. However, one strand of pre-Socratic thought was proto-evolutionary in form. The 5th-Century philosopher Empedocles saw the cosmos as an evolutionary process. In this scheme, elements encountered one another, forming larger bodies that would survive if they were useful. Despite bearing some resemblance to a crude form of natural selection, this is clearly distinct from the evolutionary model that characterised early material culture studies in its modern form. Given the usefulness in looking beyond the strictest sense of the origins of material culture as a disciplinary form, it is therefore worthwhile sketching out a more general sense of anthropological thought, as well as that specifically relating to material culture.

As Erickson and Murphy point out, travel writing represented another form of secular ancient Greek tradition. Best represented by Heroditus writing in the 5th century B.C., he 'observed diversity in a relatively objective, or non-ethnocentric, way, by correlating it with geography, climate, and other features of the natural world.'³⁶ His emphasis on human acts as opposed to religious explanations suggests the possible status of his writing as an ancient precursor to ethnography. While

Athenian philosophy may represent a significant form of epistemological and social shift, the consistency of humanist thought is sustained through Socrates, Plato and Aristotle: 'Aristotle was curious about the relationships among natural and social objects, which he assumed existed and were knowable'.³⁷ Through the linear sequence of Aristotle's tutoring of Alexander the Great, this scientific materialism, complete with its emphasis on the teasing out relationships between people and the material world, was carried and transmitted through the actions of Alexander's campaigns. Indeed, the great and lost Library at Alexandria is hailed as the first museum. These strains of antique thought represent a process of questioning both humankind, and the relationships that people have, both physically and socially, to the world and each other. Therefore, these are distant origins that see what might be characterised as anthropological enquiry as a pragmatic study of matter itself.

Although denying that material culture exists as a firmly delineated subject, providing it with a certain sense of freedom from reductionism, Miller suggests that the development of material culture studies as a contemporary disciplinary subject may be seen as a two-staged process. He divides the first stage of its disciplinarity as 'the insistence that things matter and that to focus upon material worlds does not fetishize them since they are not some separate superstructure to social worlds.'³⁸ Coming into fruition in the 1980s, key theories in material culture in this first stage of its disciplinarity demonstrated that social worlds could not be differentiated from materiality or material culture. Rather they were as much constituted by materiality, as materiality was constituted by the social or cultural. In this phase, the emphasis was on the notion that things mattered, that material culture was a serious topic, worthy of revival, and not just an indulgent or reactionary fetishism. He cites as important examples of this Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* and Arjun Appaduria's (Ed.) *Social Life of Things*, and suggests that such texts gave rise to a variety of approaches, including Chris Tilley's conceptualisation of material culture as analogous with text, to which I shall return subsequently.

Miller writes that now that the first stage is in a sense complete, in that its essential points have been clearly demonstrated, the work of the second stage can be described as different but equally relevant: the diversity of material worlds can be

viewed as each others contexts. The study of the diversity of material forms is therefore the thing that might characterise this secondary stage. The sheer scale and variety that this suggests is:

perhaps one of the main stumbling blocks in the formation of a material culture studies (...) but it also offers a huge potential if we try to consider what it might offer academic analytical concerns. The clear imperative then is to turn what at first seems daunting and problematic into the very significance and interest of material culture studies.³⁹

This is in contrast to the possibility of purely reducing material worlds to models of the social world, to simply map pre-existing theories from elsewhere onto forms of material culture. It is also depicted as an opportunity to resist the compartmentalisation of the diversity of material worlds into 'specific sub-disciplinary concerns such as the study of textiles or architecture.'⁴⁰ Part of what it is that Miller seems to be getting at with his call for an active second stage is a clear differentiation from the first. This differentiation is characterised by bodies of work that are best understood in relation to the issues that they address, making up relatively discreet arguments formed around very specific and particular sets of issues. Miller also argues against readings in which objects and materiality may be read as representational symbols, or as text to be analyzed.

Instead he calls for an attention both to the generality of materiality and to the specificity of particular manifestations in order to address what is both problematic with the field of material culture studies, and how this might actually provide it with its significance as a site of enquiry:

To do this, I want to suggest that the generality of materiality, that is any attempt to construct general theories of the material quality of artefacts, commodities, aesthetic forms and so forth, must be complemented by another strategy that looks to the specificity of material domains and the way form itself is employed to become the fabric of cultural worlds.⁴¹

Miller's concern with the ways in which this might have come about so far, with the establishment of journals and academic departments that adopt a narrowly defined subject area of material culture is that through pragmatic and even commercial concerns, there is no sense in which these activities are perceived internally as part of a broader commitment to the investigation and analysis of material culture:

One of the disadvantages of the present state of academic study is that the specificity of material forms are most likely to be of interest and concern if they happen to fall within what has already become constituted as an institutional domain such as building studies or food studies.⁴²

There is little sense of the activities cited by Miller viewing themselves as part of a larger study of material culture. The cost of this is that there is not much attention given to Miller's preoccupation with the ways in which specific material domains might contribute to an understanding of the larger generality of difference.

Miller's argument, while perhaps so straightforward that it is potentially easy to overlook, is, I would suggest, resonant and convincing enough to warrant thinking through as a source of methodological value. For one thing, he advocates a creative selection of topics of enquiry, a description that might well fit my own choice of study in this instance. To use a novel as a material world in this manner is, as far as I can tell, unprecedented, and so might well represent such a 'creative' approach to selection. Yet it is the degree of attention given to the specificity of forms that is really Miller's point in differentiating a second stage of material culture studies and the potentialities implied therein. This involves a narrow focus upon the object of study, yet Miller refers to the field's troubled past, and the possibility of accusations of fetishism. In defence, he suggests that the studies with which he is involved, as practising anthropologist, teacher and editor, belong to a tradition that prevents the fetishization of material forms:

Indeed we feel it is precisely those studies that quickly move the focus from object to society in their fear of fetishism and their apparent embarrassment at being, as it were, caught gazing at mere objects, that retain the negative consequences of the term 'fetishism'.⁴³

The assertion he makes is for work (as exemplified by the texts collected by Miller within the volume that his text serves as introduction for) that may often dwell on more mundane qualities of materiality, 'we are able to unpick the more subtle connections with cultural lives and values that are objectified through these forms, in part, because of the particular qualities they possess.'⁴⁴

While there is a sense of Miller's generative approach to material culture that is exciting and appealing in thinking through how the field itself might be thought through, perhaps the claims to differentiate a 'progressive' second stage in contrast to a flawed, and somewhat stagnant first stage, is over-determined. This is pointed out as I would like to sustain and to some extent recover the value of this first stage. In this first stage, the point that material things are important, as Miller says, that they 'matter', had been theorised, despite the manner in which it is accounted for by Miller:

There was, however, a major fault with the body of work that established this theorizing of cultural forms, much of which came out of various versions of formal, structural and semiotic analysis associated with writers such as Barthes, Baudrillard, Douglas and Lévi-Strauss. In formal analysis the major technique was to reveal the homologies between distinctions drawn in one sphere with those of another. So, for example, a dimension already regarded as important such as class or gender could be shown to be reproduced in part through a host of material taxonomies as in clothing, building or systems for the classification of time, which may at first have appeared to be based upon the same structural order but through analysis were revealed to be part of what Bourdieu called the same 'habitus'.⁴⁵

Miller's accusation is one of a lack of appropriate attention to specificity, an accusation that seems equally applicable to his dismissal. While this scepticism is useful in striving to think beyond and avoid the simple mapping of social forms onto convenient material examples, a process that might tend to simply reiterate the models that one started with, his actual objection may be rooted in an antagonism between complex theoretical argument over straightforward statistically provable ethnographic fieldwork, or at least to contributions that can prove their apparently objective value. Miller's status as self-appointed guardian of material culture studies is both frustratingly narrow-minded, yet excitingly generative in what might be possible within the field and the importance of its growth. This thesis will make no such distinctions between work which is and is not permissible, but will attempt to build upon the sense of the study of material culture as more than the straightforward reiteration of external models folded upon a world of objects. This work, if necessary, can be seen as situated within an emergent third stage of material culture studies - building upon the larger generality of difference. Rather than constraining itself within over-determined disciplinary restrictions, the discussion of material culture may be brought into a more general discursive arena.

It is important to emphasise material culture here, rather than just approaches that relate to anthropology, ethnographic or even archaeological approaches. I make no claim to be the first to explore overlaps between art or visual culture and anthropological concerns. This is an established field of enquiry, as is well demonstrated by, for example, Alex Coles (Ed.), *Site Specificity: The Ethnographic Turn* (2000) and Lucien Taylor (Ed.) *Visualizing Theory* (1994). Yet such works concentrate far more on a politics of observation, and rather exotic acts of one discipline learning from another, than on anything that might touch on generalities or specificities of material culture. Rather, this thesis is far closer in intention to the sentiment articulated in the closing lines of Preziosi's *Rethinking Art History*:

'art history' might be the history, theory, and criticism of the multiplicity of cultural processes that can be constru(ct)ed as enframing: an accounting for objects and their subjects, with all that that might entail.⁴⁶

It is hard to imagine how to add to this account, concise but overwhelming in its implied interpretative possibilities. Yet if I can make a single contribution to this discussion, it would be to suggest an alternate reiteration of Preziosi's statement. The only variation is the replacement of the term 'art history' with 'material culture'. Such a substitution is necessary only to expand the disciplinary horizon of the term art history, as well as its allied fields: 'art criticism, aesthetic philosophy, art practice, connoisseurship, the art market, museology, tourism, commodity fashion systems, and the heritage industry'.⁴⁷ Material culture as a term might also substitute the use of 'postmodern', a problematically indefinite expression much in use at the time of Burgin's *End of Art Theory*, but the value and consistency of which has long since appeared increasingly questionable.⁴⁸ It is necessary to continue to develop critical forms that reflect Burgin's account that acknowledge not only objects that might be hard to incorporate within an art historical context – and of course of particular significant in this instance are forms of literature and text – but also to recognise that the category boundaries of art and its fields are necessary for sustaining and engaging with the all that might fall within its associated fields. Art may be incorporated into a larger sense of material culture, but it is a distinct category within it. I'd like to suggest that to make this substitution is actually to act upon Preziosi's propositional description: 'A disciplinary account that attends to all this – whether we name that art history or not – would itself be worth attending to.'⁴⁹ This thesis is a tentative and exploratory attempt to do just this.

As stated earlier, there is a tendency for writing influenced by encounters between art and anthropology to emphasise notions of ethnographic gaze or an ethics of observation/participation, as well as privileging oppositions of difference and alterity. Here I am not talking about the practices of artists as such, which are of course generators of meaningful forms of material culture. Rather I am drawing attention to some discursive responses around practice, such as Susanne Kuechler's writing on Sophie Calle (an example of the possible reflexivity of anthropological discourse – an anthropologist writing about art) or Miwon Kwon's identification of an ethnographic approach in the works of Lan Tuazon and Nikki S. Lee (an art

historian interpreting art with an anthropological twist to its form/content).⁵⁰ This latter example is characteristic of a kind of borrowing of forms from one to the other, adding both some frisson to the proceedings, as well as drawing on the exotic other as a form of legitimising authority. This is in no small part due to the influence of the work of James Clifford, and in particular *The Predicament of Culture*,⁵¹ which traces specific historical relationships between art, ethnography and ethnological object, but also sets out to trace and evoke a more general global terrain of representation and responsibility determined by mutable encounters with otherness.

The dominant characterisation of art's relevance to anthropology, and vice versa, is critiqued in Hal Foster's 'The Artist as Ethnographer'.⁵² Foster's scathing essay denounces a quasi-anthropological scenario of unreflective practices and discourses. The object of his critique is what Foster describes as an 'ethnographic paradigm', identifiable during the 1980s and 90s in contemporary art and its interpretative confabulations. This paradigm is structurally similar to a model taken from Walter Benjamin's 'The Author as Producer'. While Benjamin demands that artists transform the techniques of media and force change in the apparatuses of culture in order to side with the proletariat, Foster suggests that the ethnographer paradigm has seen the displacement of the social with the cultural/anthropological, class and capitalist oppression replaced by race and colonialist oppression. While this is valuable in identifying the apparatus to transform as the exclusionary institutions of art, and the articulation of struggles made in the name of the culturally and ethnic other, Foster finds the paradigm ultimately problematic. This is problematic not just in the act of displacement – displacing the social and economic - but also in the un-reflexive essentialising of race and otherness. The politics of alterity can be made to form an uncritical core of practice and discourse. Foster reminds us that we must question the 'realist assumption', the automatic coding of essentialised identity. Engagements in the ethnographic paradigm must retain a sense of the historical, and develop an unfaltering sense of reflexivity. As I will describe subsequently, this is an important notion to retain in a reading of *The Time Machine*, both as a general set of methodological approaches, but also that the coding

of essentialised identity will emerge as a significant quality of the novel's sense of materiality and material culture.

An exception amongst the tendency for engagements between art and anthropology to privilege a sense of the artist as ethnographer paradigm exists amongst the series of publications and projects undertaken by Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska, which have managed to establish an engagement between art and anthropology through an explicit emphasis on material culture. This is in part carried out through the extension of their practice as artists into forms of critical writing, and the production of books as either the work as singular object of practice, or a component of a project. In 1997, they curated *Collected*, an exhibition at the Photographers' Gallery in London, which included work in a number of different locations outside the gallery. Their own contribution to the show was a small leaflet entitled *Browse*. In its original form, *Browse* was available, as a kind of free promotional guide, in both Selfridges and the British Museum. In their book, *The Value of Things*, the pamphlet has been adapted and reproduced as a chapter, demonstrating with efficacy the central premise of the book: the close proximity of the department store and the museum as sites that organize and facilitate an encounter with objects. *Browse* combines photographic images of carefully selected objects from Selfridges and the British Museum, arranging them alongside one another, destabilizing their familiarity and implicating their place within a broad, complex set of processes and values. A pair of immaculate Dr Martins shoes are partnered by the remains of Roman boots, both pragmatically described in minimal terms and given dates. *The Value of Things* perhaps best represents the commitment of Cummings and Lewandowska to understandings of and engagement with material culture. They have also recognized that interpretive and analytical writing can be a part of contemporary art practice that is as relevant as showing gallery-based work. Their historical and theoretical research was developed in parallel to a huge archive of photographs taken in both institutions. The visual material and text has been arranged with particular attention to an overall design. While the contents pages look like a departmental map, the book itself is chaotic in its appearance and takes some getting use to. It is not possible to read it directionally and uninterrupted from cover

to cover. Texts are subdivided, sometimes with two or three strands across two pages, as well as images and their captions. This is a space that must be navigated, rather than one that the reader is directed through. This suggests comparisons with potential ways of seeing that contradict the ordered narratives of museums and department stores. It also suggests a phenomenally orientated manifestation of materiality in acts of reading.

The historical sequence of the book opens with an account of the British Museum and is mirrored further on by a subsequent chapter that addresses the general history of the department store, leading up to the opening of Selfridges on Oxford Street in 1909 and its early development. This privileges a familiar narrative of 'late modernity', that the fabric and structures of our society are essentially an extension of the rapid change and development seen throughout the nineteenth century. The danger here is of presenting a narrow view that only recognized a particular, perhaps over-familiar, historical trajectory. However, the narrative of modernity is further complicated and multiplied by the possibilities that have been opened up by the systems of arrangement that shape the book as an object. Histories are laid out in parallel sequences, fractured by keyword subheadings, floating paragraphs and a systematic variety of formats, with the overall intention of structuring a new constellation of elements, brought together to form a specific perspective that can help to describe a present moment of confusion.

The stories of both museum and shop are punctuated and contextualized by an intriguing series of interruptions. Most explicitly, they are partnered respectively by sections on the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the First World War, ideological breaks in the narratives of the museum, commodities and a broader history of material culture. The Great Exhibition helped forge a modern understanding of the concepts of display, spectacle, surveillance and commodity, determining the form of the modern museum and gallery as well as spaces of commerce, denying the possibility of conceptually separating these sites. The First World War has long been recognized as a tear in the psychic and social fabric of history that violently separated the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Within this story, it is also the end of the nineteenth century as the first great era of industrialized material expansion.

The period also saw the shelving of the plans to expand the British Museum and led to its temporary closure. When it reopened, the Museum is pictured as a nineteenth-century institution that is out of touch with the new social and cultural environment. The old department stores were also increasingly threatened as the economic climate changed. The war ensured the end of a model of culture disseminated by museums and department stores that was built around stable hierarchies of knowledge. These inflexible institutions relied on the consistency of their public, principles that were destabilized, along with many other certainties, by the trauma of the war. Cummings and Lewandowska sustain this sense of inadequacy until the 1980s when the policies of Thatcherism attempted to sever the link between state and cultural institutions in favour of a market orientation. The museum moves towards the store, while in a parallel development, the dinosaur-like department store, under threat from more efficient retail operations, reverted to the spectacle of its origins, dazzling visitors with displays of lifestyle choices.

Despite the promise of a richly detailed historical constellation, it is the present moment that is really being addressed. These narratives are employed as a practical device, the whole functioning as a kind of handbook for encountering our densely layered environment. The sites chosen for analysis become the focus for an attempt to understand a broader culture that seems incomprehensible. Although providing a set of poignant descriptions, Cummings and Lewandowska fall short of employing, in a substantial manner, some of the disciplines that would appear to be useful in theorizing this field and that have obviously informed and influenced their work, such as psychoanalysis, anthropology and post-structuralist thought. However, material culture - here understood as objects, the institutions in which they are gathered, interpreted and sold, history, social forms, interpretation, value, desire - is articulated through the book as it operates as an accomplished research project, encountering the British Museum and Selfridges and the presentation of that fieldwork within a broader theoretical and historical context. The visual impact generated by this is, at its best, remarkable and demonstrates the successful use of both image, text and the very object of the book as part of a critical and engaging art practice that never ceases to concern itself with its surroundings. The whole

enterprise might be seen in terms not of Foster's ethnographic paradigm as it is articulated as a model for reform, but might more fully realise the notion of artist as ethnographer. Foster argues that the spatial logic of postmodernism, visible in the themes and territories of exploration predominantly characterised by a politics of alterity, must be tempered by an intersecting temporal axis. This might be enough to rescue a practice or discourse from quasi-anthropology and restore some sense of Benjamin's historical avant-garde. *The Value of Things* is historical, as well as spatial, in its analysis, and certainly makes reflexivity a central device of its operation. Yet more significantly, it demonstrates an ability to discursively articulate material culture outside of an anthropological context but in a manner that does not restrict the field of the work within its originary disciplinarity – that is, coming from a fine art context.

The Value of Things demonstrates an unorthodox possibility for a complex engagement with material culture. Yet it is one that although a book, is closer to forms of art's practice than its theory. Nevertheless, I would argue that it is still the closest form of approach to material culture that can serve as a direct precedent for this thesis. While the form of the thesis is far more conventional than Cummings and Lewandowska's skilful use of book design, text and image, it is far more radical in its choice of object. The case I wish to make for a discussion of material culture, through a reading of Wells's novel, is not that objects possess communicative properties or can be read as capable of transmitting meaning. While I will be building upon traditions of writing that have asserted how such meanings can be read, and what sort of messages things might be capable of suggesting, this thesis is actually concerned, through a specific act of critical reading, with how an understanding of material culture might function as an interpretative tool for looking at a range of objects and cultural forms.

The preoccupation with material culture that this thesis articulates, and the disciplinary context of the thesis's writing, must be recognised as being within the field of fine art. I am operating with an understanding that historical notions of material culture are common to the development of art history and theory as a field of enquiry, but also that material culture is a useful way of conceiving of artworks

and their place within a broader set of cultural contexts. This is in part articulated through the parallel histories of *The Value of Things*, but, as discussed, is more explicitly addressed by Preziosi⁵³ and also by Matthew Rampley's 'Anthropology at the Origins of Art History'.⁵⁴ Art, or at least a limited understanding of modernism and its variations, could be thought of as a bounded yet diverse category of material culture, one that functions accordingly within that category, but not as a set of autonomous objects – and it is important not to assume that artworks can always be characterised as objects rather than cultural forms in an expanded sense – isolated from a larger sense of the culture in which they exist.

My own engagement with such objects, as well as with forms from related but external spaces, is often as – perhaps for want of a better term – a critic.⁵⁵ Criticism, as an act of reading and of generative interpretation, is central within the imaginative core of this thesis, although not its primary theme. Nevertheless, this thesis is an attempt to think about acts of reading which cannot be alienated from criticism, as a method that can reflect and articulate forms of material culture, rather than obscure them. Henri Focillon described artworks as forms that rise proudly above forms of interpretation thrust upon them. A work of art 'serves to illustrate history, man and the world itself, it goes further than this: it creates man, creates the world and sets up within history an immutable order.'⁵⁶ Focillon concedes that under such conditions a wilderness of criticism may spread up around an artwork: 'flowers of interpretation that do not adorn, but completely conceal.'⁵⁷ In response, I would like to suggest the need for acts of criticism that attend to forms of material culture – those things that create the world – which can help to illuminate, reveal, and engage with forms that are profoundly generative.

Criticism is, I would like to suggest, a necessary term to sustain, as opposed to a singular reliance upon its sibling, theory. As Joseph Leo Koerner states, the etymological root of 'theory', the Greek *theoros*, denotes 'spectator'.⁵⁸ This might imply notions of passivity and distance, of looking to, and from, afar.⁵⁹ In contrast, I would like to assert that criticism, and its root 'critic', allow us to think of *krinein* – to 'judge' or 'decide'. Judgement and decision are, I would argue, issues of urgency in reading and interpreting the objects that fall within an analytical gaze. Similarly,

they are issues that I wish to bind to an understanding of material culture. And while this text may be read as an act of literary criticism, I would like to suggest an expanded notion of criticism, that is coextensive to, and dependent on, an expanded sense of material culture and its relationship to text.

In order to frame an introduction to the issue of criticism, I would like to recall a recent event at London's Tate Modern to launch the book *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*.⁶⁰ This is a useful point to introduce early in thesis, as it will open up not only a discussion on criticism, but help to suggest a context for both the spectral presence of art in this thesis, and of the shared tradition of thinking about material culture, as it casts its shadows over art history, as well as the other fields of enquiry that constitute it. As one of the book's authors, Rosalind Krauss provided a significant reminder of her actual role and of that of her fellow co-authors – Yve-Alain Bois, Benjamin Buchloh and Hal Foster. Her claim, was that it was misleading to think of this esteemed panel as art historians as such, but rather that it should be acknowledged that they are also, and predominantly, practicing critics, who still publish regularly as such within the pages of *Artforum* magazine, the journal *October*,⁶¹ and elsewhere. That these four figures, who have now provided a weightily authoritative history of twentieth-century art in their own terms, should be seen as critics, seems significant. It does, after all, reinforce the distinction between 'spectator' and 'judge'. Through their influential writing and editorial pre-eminence, they have participated in and helped shape an art history as an expanded discipline, which has arguably embraced, adapted, fostered, distorted, abused and advanced aspects of areas of thought such as structuralism, poststructuralism, Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, and postcolonialism.⁶² Krauss seeks to remind her audience that her role in this theoretical terrain, and in relation to the artworks she discusses, is as much as critic as it is as historian.

Such a claim should not come as a surprise to attentive readers of Krauss's work. Indeed, it is important to remember that her now seminal 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' written in 1978, and first published in *October* in 1979, focused on practices that were recent at the time of writing, such as a work by Mary Miss – *Perimeters/Pavillions/Decoys* – from the year the article was written. It is only really

historical in its temporal distance from us in the present. I will return to this essay subsequently in the thesis to discuss its relationship to methodologies of thinking about material culture. However, for now it is Krauss' short text from 1981, 'Poststructuralism and the Paraliterary', which provides a more useful and explicit discussion of criticism. Krauss is writing not about artworks, but what she describes as the 'paraliterary' in a discussion about poststructuralism and its perceived threat to literature. Like Krauss, I would also suggest that this account, once a response to a present condition, now a historical precedent, 'is of much wider conceptual interest',⁶³ than to a hermetic field of literature and literary criticism, which as a generalised discipline is identified and defined by its fear of structuralist and poststructuralist critical theory, and 'the deepening technocratization of graduate studies'⁶⁴. Rather, Krauss' very suggestion of a paraliterary space is that of a general and constructive use of structuralist and poststructuralist writing. The later work of Barthes, she writes, cannot be called either criticism or non-criticism:

Rather, criticism finds itself caught in a dramatic web of many voices, citations, asides, divigations. And what is created, as in the case of much of Derrida, is a kind of paraliterature.⁶⁵

The paraliterary space that Krauss describes is one that is now familiar to acts of reading, whether they be of texts as conventionally understood, or objects that may be read as texts. It is the space of 'debate, quotation, partisanship, betrayal, reconciliation'.⁶⁶ It is certainly an important description, and one that I recognise both enacted in the material world that constitutes *The Time Machine*, and as a general principle by which artworks may be interpreted.

That an object or text not correspond to 'the space of unity, coherence, or resolution that we think of as constituting the work of literature' certainly seems an obvious possibility now, as does the procedure of Barthes' writing in *S/Z* taking on a hallucinatory slowness in the unravelling of the codes of Balzac's *Sarrasine*. However, this clearly needed some more persuasive handling in North American academic realms in 1980, a fact that should persuasively make the case that such

discussions and the modes of reading made available by them have become taken for granted. The descriptive action performed by Krauss in arranging Barthes and Derrida within the context of her discussion is as follows: if modernist literature demanded reflection upon the conditions of its construction, insisting on reading as a critical act, 'then it is not surprising that the medium of a *postmodernist* literature should be the critical text wrought into paraliterary form. And what is clear is that Barthes and Derrida are the *writers*, not the critics, that students now read.'⁶⁷ Both Barthes and Derrida are formative presences that haunt my text, but whose verifiable presences might be more elusive. Nevertheless, implicit in the thesis is a move to view them as critics – an act that also suggests a reminder and recovery of their status as critics. This is therefore an attempt to rethink such paraliterary engagements in general. To read, for example, the work of both Barthes and Derrida not as a set of slightly exotic forms of paratliterary writing, but in terms of how their work may still suggest forms that can operate as, and inform, acts of criticism.

Krauss' assertion that she and her colleagues are in fact critics perhaps reflects an anxiety recently described by Foster, one which suggests a crisis, and therefore a sense of urgency in the need to address the status and possibilities of criticism:

The art critic is an endangered species. In cultural reviews in North America and Western Europe one finds writers moonlighting as critics, artists switch-hitting as the same, or philosophers unwinding, but almost no one tagged as 'art critic' pure and simple. Odder still is that art critics are fairly scarce in prominent art magazines like *Artforum*. What has happened to this figure that, only a generation or two ago, strode through the cultural landscape with the force of a Clement Greenberg or a Harold Rosenberg?⁶⁸

To simplify this question and facilitate a rather flippant response, it could be said that this image itself perpetuates a resistance to the figure of the critic, and further endangers the species. Perhaps it is the result of my having spent too long immersed in literatures of the fantastic in researching this thesis, but Foster's account suggests

notions of gigantic and monstrous creatures, dinosaurs, literally embodying the metaphorical suggestion that such things as art critics be extinct.

The image is an apt one in beginning to respond to Foster's problem. It is precisely this notion of the extinction of a particular form of critic, predominantly as formalist, that suggests that writing about art needs to be addressed in a different manner. Greenberg and Rosenberg have been subject to a degree of often irrational opposition in the last four decades, becoming very much the thing in which discursive strategy or position is placed in relation to (As discussed by Bois⁶⁹). In particular, within the historical North American trajectory evoked by Foster, Donald Judd's text 'Specific Objects'⁷⁰ seems particularly noteworthy. Not only does it serve as a reminder that artists were established writers of criticism in the mid 1960s, but demonstrates that extant and dominant forms of criticism failed to recognise and respond to the works that artists were making, and that new forms of vocabulary and interpretation were required to respond to new types of objects.

Foster's question falls short of really addressing the situation and the proposed crises of criticism.⁷¹ I would like to argue that there are two significant omissions that would be useful to explore here. Both are straightforward, uncontroversial, and constitute formative principles in the fields of both forms visual culture/art historical analysis, and more disciplinarily conventional studies of material culture. The first of these comes from Roland Barthes' essay from 1968, 'The Death of the Author'.⁷² Foster seems to have omitted, perhaps because of its age and very obviousness, one of the critical and theoretical devices that have shaped his conundrum. It is Barthes, after all, who suggests that to destabilise the mythic and ideological form of the author is also to bring about an end of the reign of the critic as uncontested arbiter of judgement and interpretation.

The second omission is one already raised by Burgin and Preziosi in this thesis, and that is the need to acknowledge that Foster's account must be seen within a broader set of concerns, which can be identified as a cultural field as understood by Pierre Bourdieu.⁷³ This is an intellectual field that is both comparable to a economic one, but that is also in part economic in nature, and which reorganises the role of cultural producer within it. As the field's definitions, conditions and boundaries

change,⁷⁴ so do the roles of producer, be they artist, critic, curator, gallerist, educator, or, as is often the case, a combination of any number of these.⁷⁵ Bourdieu's notion of cultural fields, one of which might constitute the general category of contemporary art, inform the methodology of this thesis. While this aspect of Bourdieu's work does not refer specifically to ways of reading artefacts – unlike his structuralist reading of a Kabyle house as divided into symbolic regions of male and female⁷⁶ – it is nonetheless essential for understanding artworks as contextualised rather than essential forms, and for thinking of a broader set of relationships between different aspects of material culture. It does so by placing art in relation to, as well as within, a set of other fields, suggesting both connections and structural homologies.⁷⁷

Such an oversimplification, as sketched out by Foster, of the economic and ideological landscape of art's production, distribution and interpretation, is bound to lead to caricature, which is precisely what Alex Coles provides with a deliberately absurd image of the art critic as bathroom critic, evoking the fictional Waldo Lydecker, penning his vitriolic newspaper column from a tub overflowing with soap suds. The real-life counterparts of Lydecker were superseded by what Coles refers to as the critic of the study. The difference, he argues, is one of how the art work appears in the text. Or rather, it is how the critic is positioned in the act of writing:

(...)the difference turns on how the critic relates to the artwork through the texture and tenor of their prose. While the bathroom critic shuffles in parallax with the work, the critic of the study just stands still in front of it. As with their attire, the critic's posture is vital to their output.⁷⁸

Coles's account is simplistic, and does little more than caricature the so called critic of the study, which he sees as a stilted form of writing dependent on academic practice. Criticism, he suggests somewhat literally, is always limited to the printed page, while art is able to adapt and exploit new forms of media and technology. He likens this situation to be like as if artists were 'forever confined to canvas and oil paint'.⁷⁹ The critic, he suggests, always lags behind the potentially radical and innovative forms that an art object can take. This account displays characteristic of

both amnesia and myopia. It is forgetful of the very forms of criticism that Krauss makes the focus of her paraliterary discourse, which recognises the technological possibilities of theory in writing, and too short sighted to recognise that such engagements with theoretical and academic writing are the discourse that allow such a conversation about criticism to take place. Art practice is given the privilege of radical status, whereas criticism seems in nature to be essentially divorced from any other forms of radical, and critical, thought. This is not only to ignore forms in which text can be considered and written, but also to ignore the voices that can speak, particularly in relation to issues, for example, of gender, race, nationality, class, sexuality.

While he berates the generalised caricature of the academic critic, there is at least some degree of a concession to academic criticism, that such issues have been made problematic, or addressed, in the first place. Coles says this is the motive for critics either proceeding towards academicism, or towards a kind of journalistic sloppiness. Either way: 'ensuring something of the gist of the artwork finds its way into the register of the writing has become increasingly rare.'⁸⁰ This simplistic relationship, does, however, get to the point of this thesis, which is itself a call for criticism, or an attempt to employ a methodology of criticism, that does indeed allow the work to suggest its interpretation, rather than impose either theoretical schema, or tight methodological formula, upon an object. Another recent challenge to processes of decisive interpretation, one that suggests that the reading of (art) objects must privilege some more direct forms of engagement, has been made by Mark Wilsher (in an article mentioned towards the beginning of this chapter). This is of particular interest here as it offers an intersection between approaches to criticism (and a more general attitude to artworks) and notions of material culture and the ways in which objects may be thought to signify. It has something to offer as a call against a kind of over-determined approach to reading objects. That rather, objects should be acknowledge as generator of their readings.

His argument is that acts of interpretation and explanation, whether they come from artists, or a stigmatized version of a writer of 'theory', have an impeding

effect on the ways in which artworks might be encountered and experienced. This is at odds with what Wilsher sees as an inalienable quality of art practice:

‘From seeing images in stains on the wall to embracing playfulness and risk more generally, the role of the artist is one that naturally incorporates large amounts of managed undecidability.’⁸¹

For Wilsher, art must be allowed this sense of play, and that in contrast, acts of explanation are deadening. Yet his notion of play, of audiences being allowed to make their own interpretations, is simplistic. It firstly suggests that individuals are able to act independently, uninfluenced by any other epistemological, ideological or institutional factors, as long as they aren’t provided with anything that constitutes either an explanatory or interpretative opinion. Secondly, in an unlikely contradiction, it also suggests that art-viewing subjects are incapable of thinking anything other than what such an interpretative account may be, that they can only think what they are told, whether in the briefest of explanations or in theoretical extrapolations. Instead, Wilsher argues for a form of vagueness, which itself is frustratingly vague.

He criticises an extraordinarily undefined field of ‘art theory’ as trying to account for that which cannot be articulated by language. In doing so, he claims that it restricts and attempts to contain anything that might be seen as either dangerous or attractive. He makes another disturbing generalisation in claiming that what he describes as ‘academic cultural theory’ has, it needs to be recognised, been proved inadequate and run its course. This is disturbing not just in its formless, and boundless, scope, but the force of its negation. He rests this argument upon Gavin Butt’s recent book *After Criticism*, which Wilsher reads as an account of the ossification of postmodern undecidability. Wilsher’s reading of Butt echoes Krauss’s discussion of paraliterary forms. This time though, the argument lacks any of Krauss’s sense of critique and utility, and instead forms a rather muddy account, citing Butt in describing the generalised matter of a theory as ‘a body of work that is renowned for its destruction of authorial value’ which ‘comes to be accredited with

precisely such forms of authority'.⁸² Quite where this notion of 'deconstruction of authorial value' is drawn is unclear, and provides little insight into the relationships between artworks and text.

There is also a fundamental misunderstanding about the readability of artworks. Wilsher feels it is necessary for the artist to say nothing in order to allow the artwork to speak, to leave all avenues open, as if interpretation is impossible against the stated intentions of the artist. Perhaps Wilshire needs to actually read some of that 'theory' which he seems to think has passed through its encounter with art. It is precisely his lack of specificity that reveals the same problematic conditions that he is describing. He is failing to acknowledge his objects of criticism, which here are text based discourses generalised as some abstract notion of 'theory'. Perhaps Wilsher's argument is most useful in that it could be read to suggest a category of cultural object for artworks, for marking out something that is different about artworks, that they are best served by a recognition of a resistance to interpretation. This could constructively be thought of as contributing to an understanding of the boundaries that define artworks and differentiate them from other forms of material culture.

In response to Wilsher, Peter Suchin cites Barthes from *The Responsibility of Forms*: 'Meaning sticks to man',⁸³ reiterating the obvious, that meaning is inevitable, unavoidable, and he rejects Wilsher's simplistic position:

Strong work is not destroyed by its destroyed by its engagement with critical theory; it may in fact be opened up, energised, reinscribed with new meanings through such an encounter whilst avoiding reduction to any single definition. If a particular work can be explained away by theory then it can hardly be claimed to have that supposedly indefinable quality which allows it to resist 'being put into words'.⁸⁴

However, Suchin shifts the emphasis of the discussion and points out that relationships between art and textual interpretation need to be placed within a recent

historical context, that in Britain since the 1960s, art education has been orientated to come closer into line with university degrees, establishing a move that 'meant that art history and, in due course, 'theory', became an inescapable component of art school studies.'⁸⁵ Suchin is critical of the fine art PhD, as a culmination of theoretical, written work, and studio-based practice. Ultimately, he reads it as symptomatic of ideological structures within higher education institutions and:

the radical redefinition of research that has taken place within the university context within the last few years. The word no longer means sitting in the library pouring over books and learned journals or getting information and resources for the making of a work of art. Rather, research is now that which results from these and related activities, the product or 'outcome' of practice, and not its basic conditions of possibility. If it doesn't generate money in the Research Assessment Exercise then, these days, it just isn't 'research'.⁸⁶

Suchin is justified in emphasising a shift in the meaning of 'research' from process to product – in particular as the kind of product that constitutes research in an art context has generated much intellectual and practical activity that feels distinctly artificial. There is also now a dubious sense of arbitrational power wielded by those who control the forms of distinction that validate the genuine and therefore money-generating forms of research. However, his account falls short of a more balanced understanding of the issues raised in his discussion. For one thing, Suchin fails to acknowledge that this actually enables and encourages much varied activity within art schools. More importantly, he fails to acknowledge that generally, one of these factors precipitates the other, that in fact in order to achieve the outcomes that constitute 'research' in this way, there will have been much of the studious activity that he describes, as well as recognising that the 'work' that artists and writers actually do may take forms other than the most direct forms of production.

Perhaps more significantly, Suchin concentrates his discussion on practice-based doctorates, and fails to acknowledge that alongside these are written doctorates within the same courses, which demand as much as they would in any

other discipline. In fact, the issue of discipline is an important and problematic factor, that without the relationship to practice, there is no disciplinary framework for a thesis-only doctorate taken in an art department or art school. This very destabilization of discipline resonates with the apparent need to rethink how artworks can relate to theory and interpretation. Here, the potential of a fine art doctorate resonates with Hal Foster's description of his own recent methodological ambition: 'not to impose theory on art, but to see how one might implicate the other'.⁸⁷ While some projects may take on the form of an art historical thesis as a model, many theses are engaged in a performative act of constituting new forms of disciplinary engagement and configuration. This of course leads to contention and disagreement about what the aims and outcomes of a thesis may be, but offers a valuable space for innovative research and thought – and perhaps acts of criticism – in ways that employ, exploit, abuse and cross disciplinary and intellectual boundaries, and perhaps ultimately help to rethink them.

Chapter 2: Text and Utopia, Materiality and Portent.

Imagine yourself looking out onto a silent landscape of verdant hills and lush vegetation, punctuated by magnificent yet seemingly derelict palaces. After having embarked on a perilous journey and travelling far, perhaps further than anyone before, you have found yourself, as much by accident than design, in this uncharted place. You are effectively alone here, or at least the only one of your kind. This land is disturbingly strange and unfamiliar, its alterity emphasised by the great distance traversed. Yet although different, it still has some kind of vital connection to your point of origin, and forces you to think as much of home as of the scene before you.

This sketch relates to a particular form of narrative contrivance. It fits into the specific tradition of utopian fiction; not so much a loosely defined genre as it is a uncanny and recurring spectre. Alternatively it could be seen as a kind of chronic hunger that nags away from within the history of social reflection. Or maybe this type of persistent fantasy could be seen as a form of that universal peculiarity of human experience and desire - the overstepping of boundaries.⁸⁸ All of these possibilities evoke Ernst Bloch's resolute commitment to an understanding of utopia, or more specifically a utopian impulse, as a mode of observation and interpretation. Bloch's work has come to form something of a foundation for those engaged in utopia studies. This loosely defined field's most well-known proponent is Fredric Jameson, who advocates Bloch's writing in determining the possibility of utilising utopia:

Bloch posits a Utopian impulse governing everything future-orientated in life and culture; and encompassing everything from games to patent medicines, from myths to mass entertainment, from iconography to technology, from architecture to eros, from tourism to jokes and the unconscious.⁸⁹

However, Jameson detects a hermeneutic problem in Bloch's near universal recognition of the utopian impulse. What happens when the object being interpreted

is actually in a utopian form? The interpretative principle that Bloch articulated in *The Principle of Hope* (1959) is, according to Jameson, at its most effective when unveiling the utopian impulse as something concealed within unlikely locations. How, then, might this impulse be read within more explicit articulations of utopia? Is the interpretation of the future no longer necessary when addressing a text that looks directly to that which might take place far from now? The problem is articulated by Jameson as a hermeneutic paradox, which he likens to that faced by Freud when seeking to identify prior analytic forms of considering the relationship of dreams to waking life. '[H]e finally identified one obscure aboriginal tribe for whom all dreams had sexual meanings – except for overtly sexual dreams as such, which meant something else.'⁹⁰ Jameson then suggests the positing of two branches of utopian thought that can be viewed as distinct.

This is a useful act of differentiation, in that it helps to separate the specificity of Bloch's hermeneutics from a more general recognition of a thematic and quotidian understanding of utopia as relating to ill-considered, over ambitious and unrealisable forms of social organisation. Yet I would like to suggest that Jameson's opposition might be a somewhat artificial and ultimately flimsily constructed opposition. Rather than focus on the utopian impulse exclusively in its more covert expression, as Jameson argues, perhaps the world of utopian fantasy that is evoked by my introductory sketch above might be a site where impulse and self-conscious reflection are as indivisible as the interior and exterior of Benjamin's rolled-up socks. Johanne Lamoureux points out that Progress is defined by Diderot's and Alembert's *Encyclopédie* as a 'movement toward the future'.⁹¹ But above is a scenario in which while progress is longed for, the future inverts the seemingly irreversible character of progress. This allows for an alternate form of thinking about progress, that is not imperative or positivist, but that facilitates an active tension that plays on hope and the possibility of change. Utopia as impulse is subject to an active form of reflection, as both a 'within' (in the form of text) and from a position of authorial exteriority (context).

The specific fantasy of the future under discussion here is, of course, one invented by H.G. Wells at the end of the nineteenth century. Consistently engaged in

shaping ideas relating to modes of social reform, Wells's career was animated by the appearance of utopias.⁹² These both mirrored his idiosyncratic brand of socialism and stepped beyond it as his futuristic visions took their re-arrangement of society to severe extremes. Politically, he appears as a confused and confusing figure, but the sustained, urgent and ultimately hopeful presence of utopias suggests some consistency amongst contradictory elements. To a degree, Wells's utopian thinking has been sullied irrevocably by his enthusiasm for eugenics as a solution to what he identified as degenerative forces at work amongst working class populations. In *Anticipations* (1901) he went even further with this disturbing tendency, targeting non-European races with the same disdain as he did the poor of London, and suggested that they too were in need of purification. Without specifying as much, the implication is inescapably a genocidal solution.⁹³ As if such thinking wasn't controversial enough, Wells's thoughts on processes of genetic cleansing have been framed by their realisation in Nazi ideology and the atrocities of the Holocaust – the twentieth century's most appalling realisation of utopian thought.

Yet perhaps it is unfair to characterise Wells's legacy in terms of such an interpretation. Indeed, I would argue that rather than let the spectre of this racism prohibit the discussion of Wells as the author of a generative model for hermeneutic practice, it is necessary to attend momentarily to *A Modern Utopia* (1905). Wells makes it clear that his will differ from many its predecessors in that it is a world utopia, 'and so we must needs face the fact that we are to have differences of race.'⁹⁴ This is a discussion of utopia that posits as necessary the recognition and presence of alterity that is as startling as it is radical, despite a somewhat crude form of describing this variety: 'white and black, brown, red and yellow, all tints of skin, all types of body and character, will be there.'⁹⁵ Wells was a pacifist and an egalitarian socialist motivated by an inalienable sense of social justice, albeit abiding by standards of his own definition. Eugenics was a minor facet within Wells's utopian discourse, which spanned the closing decades of the nineteenth century, and half of the twentieth. While his arcane solutions to the world's ills – articulated in the speculative *Anticipations* (1901), which imagined the necessary possibility of a world state – may have (and again I need to emphasise the speculative and

deliberatively provocative nature of the statement) endorsed compulsory sterilisation amongst the masses, he also advocated games with toy soldiers. In *Little Wars* (1913), he set out a system of rules and conditions for adults to stage miniature battles on the living room floor. Written on the eve of the First World War, this wasn't just a guide for a recreational hobby, but actually a proposed means of ending hostilities between the nations of the world. His logic was that if generals and politicians were to play at war with toy soldiers, they would calculate the cost in life required for even the smallest manoeuvre. To see the price of war enacted in play, Wells argued, would eradicate its possible realisation in life. However trivial and ridiculous, viewed through the lens of the carnage that followed, his plea for peace through a diverting pastime stands out, bizarrely, in sharp clarity.

Patrick Parrinder provides a more generous account of Wells's sense of social responsibility and political engagement than I have so far suggested here:

By the 1920s, Wells was not only a famous author but a public figure whose name was rarely out of the newspapers. He briefly worked for the Ministry of Propaganda in 1918, producing a memorandum on war aims which anticipated the setting-up of the League of Nations. In 1922 and 1923 he stood for Parliament as a Labour candidate. He sought to influence world leaders, including two US Presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt. His meeting with Lenin in the Kremlin in 1920 and his interview in 1934 with Lenin's successor Josef Stalin were publicized all over the world. His high-pitched piping voice was often heard on BBC radio. In 1933 he was elected president of International PEN, the writers' organization campaigning for intellectual freedom. In the same year his books were publicly burnt by the Nazis in Berlin, and he was banned from visiting Fascist Italy. His ideas strongly influenced the Pan-European Union, the pressure group advocating European unity between the wars.⁹⁶

Parrinder usefully provides a counter-balance to those elements that seem indefensible by association in Wells's work. Perhaps more importantly here,

Parrinder's emphasis on this period of Wells's life makes clear that his fantasy writing must always be read in relation to his engagement with social reality, and in particular, as engaged in a lifelong exploration of utopian impulses.

Between the chilling suggestions of genocide and the endearingly preposterous little wars, Wells takes a reader of his utopian thought across a range of emotional responses. Like the totality of his written output, Wells's utopian thought should be read as varied and complex, determined by a set of apparently contradictory impulses. These incongruous drives are, I would like to suggest, what is significant about the presence of utopian impulses within his writing. More than this, these impulses are characteristic of the contested and unstable nature of utopian thought itself, and possibly invest Wells's utopian thinking with a critical potential. And it is with this in mind that I will attend to an early crystallization of Wells's utopian thought, in the form of *The Time Machine*. It is from this that my introductory landscape-sketch is drawn, and in which rather than set out an idealised future, he sets out to consider the worst that can happen. This is in contrast to Wells's *A Modern Utopia* which lacks the formal tightness that constitutes an intensively rendered material world in *The Time Machine*. Wells positions the later work as an explicit articulation of his utopian desires, therefore I would argue that it lacks the complexity and critical potential that I would like to argue saturates the substance of his first novel. However, I'd also like to suggest that Parrinder's account of Wells's prolonged effort to engage in political debate and change retrospectively transforms *The Time Machine* from a narrative of despair to a discourse of hope.

This short novel was the first of a sequence - *The War of the Worlds*, *The Invisible Man*, *The Island of Dr Moreau* and *The First Men in the Moon* - written between 1895 and 1901, that he described as 'Scientific Romances'. As a formative work of modern science fiction, it has an originary resonance. It precedes the forms of codification that populate science fiction in its generic forms and signal its presence elsewhere. In particular, Wells's novel exploits that essential element that Darko Suvin argues make possible the 'basis for a coherent poetics'⁹⁷ of science fiction: the aspect of strange newness, or *novum*. Suvin distinguishes science fiction

from other forms of fiction ‘by the narrative dominance or hegemony of a fictional ‘novum’ (novelty, innovation) validated by cognitive logic’.⁹⁸ As I shall argue subsequently, Wells configured his fantasies according to a very particular arrangement of cognitive logic and fictional novum, and *The Time Machine* serves as a generative model for Suvin’s influential work on science fiction.⁹⁹

However, while *The Time Machine* may hold some claim as a template for subsequent science fiction stories, it would be misleading to overly privilege its ontological status. Rather, it is worth first recognising the quantity, variety and histories of fantastic and futuristic narratives, or early science fiction, that abounded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁰⁰ Patrick Brantlinger links this tendency within Victorian fiction to an ‘increasing explanatory power and hegemony of the sciences’.¹⁰¹ As will become apparent, it needs to be stated that this is especially explicit in Wells’s scientific romances, given Wells’s scientific interests and activities prior to the writing of the novel. More generally, Brantlinger asserts that an epistemology and mode of objectivity popularised as forms of scientific method became an analogue for novelistic realism, while scientific and technological developments spurred on forms of narrative outside of the realist paradigm. These are the texts that are now identifiable as science fiction, closely related to a tradition of non-realistic narratives – particularly those relating to fantastic voyages (For example, Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726)), but more specifically bound to the Gothic Romance. *Frankenstein* (1818) is posited by Brantlinger the ‘most frequently claimed as the first work of modern science fiction’,¹⁰² which belongs clearly within its Gothic romance/horror genre. The presence of science fiction in the long nineteenth century is one that could be read in opposition to the dominance of realism and the format of the triple-decker novel. Brantlinger instead stages a conflict in which the dominance of realism weakens towards the end of the nineteenth century, resulting in a vigorous market for romance and fantasy in the 1880s and 1890s. In this account, the demise of the triple-decker novel is mirrored by a rise of mass-circulation newspapers and magazines, encouraging the writing of shorter stories and a tendency towards ‘non-realistic stories’.¹⁰³ This conflict of fictions can be seen in action in the 1870s:

Well before the 1890s, Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) had inspired various responses among novelists, some of whom wrote, instead of works of evolutionary realism or naturalism such as George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1871), stories now recognised as science-fiction classics. These include Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871) and Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872). Several tales of future wars and dystopias also appeared in the 1870s, such as George Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871). And in that decade, Jules Verne's works began to appear in translation (*Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, for instance, in 1873).¹⁰⁴

Alternatively, Brantlinger's account might provide a view of poles of fictional possibility that indicate a less opposed and more contested possibility of text based fiction. It is possible to assert that Wells uses a scientific paradigm in the constitution of his material world, not just as a source of evolutionary fantasy, but as an epistemological and methodological form of realism in the putting together of his material world. It is possible, that despite, as will be discussed subsequently, his own contrasting assertion about the role of science as replacing the traditional use of magic in stories, the epistemological import of science on fiction is not alien to science fiction. His is an approach that in Brantlinger's dichotomy is scientific, rather than based purely upon the use of science and technology as a source of fantasy, but that it is clearly science fiction.

Yet, in order to comprehend the nature of the context for Wells's work, and to further think through the dissolution of these oppositions asserted by Brantlinger, it is necessary to return to the issue of the scale of science fiction produced, not just in the last decades of the nineteenth century, but between the romantic period and World War I. Brantlinger, while privileging the aforementioned temporal and generic oppositions, cites Suvin on his attempt to map the terrain in *Victorian Science Fiction in the UK*.¹⁰⁵ Suvin's account is one that moves from expecting to undertake in the making visible an iceberg, the bulk of which lies hidden beneath the

surface. Instead he discovered an occulted continent.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, Edward James describes nineteenth-century science fiction as:

mountainous territory which still remains to some extent impenetrable and charted. The obvious high points are well-known: it is easy enough to map a mountain range from the air by noting those peaks which emerge from the clouds.¹⁰⁷

James indicates such a case in the form of Brian Aldiss's survey, *Trillion Year Spree*,¹⁰⁸ which proceeds from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), travels between Britain, France and America, to arrive at the safe and charted plateau of Wells. In opposition to this James suggests that the landscape has only gradually been revealed, and he questions the validity of the category, in that it provides 'a spurious kind of unity to what is, in fact, a collection of disparate sub-genres, with differing literary histories and characteristics.'¹⁰⁹ In particular, the texts that James cites as revelatory regarding the range of material are I.F. Clarke's *Voices Prophesying War* (1966) and Lyman Tower Sargent's *British and American Utopian Literature, 1516-1975*¹¹⁰. Yet it has been this diversity that has raised the question, as articulated by Suvin, of what constitutes science fiction. The category will be retained here, but as it will be retained with this wariness of a spurious appearance of unity, it is worth attending for a moment more to James's discomfort on the issue. In considering the term, he determines that it first appears - with a coincidental but, as will become clear, appropriate timeliness - in 1851. The context for this use is in a treatise on the poetry of science by English writer William Wilson:

Campbell [the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell] says that 'Fiction in Poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanting resemblance'. Now this applies especially to Science Fiction, in which the revealed truths of Science may be given, interwoven with a pleasing story which may itself be poetical and *true* - thus circulating a knowledge of the Poetry of Science, clothed in a garb of the Poetry of Life.¹¹¹

Wilson advocates a poetry that echoes the poetry of the marvel of creation: ‘the fact that a tear-drop ‘holds locked in its transparent cells an amount of electrical fire equal to that which is discharged during a storm from a thunder-cloud’’. James discerns Wilson’s close relationship to a more general sense of wonder that pervades many forms of science fiction, but also points out that the pleasure taken in reflecting upon technological change is undoubtedly bound a more general celebration of technology from 1851 – The Great Exhibition. For Wilson, this was a violent and spectacular revelation of radical newness that threw ‘deeply into shade the old romances and fanciful legends of our boyhood’.¹¹² However, according to James – with a single exception in the form of an editorial comment in *Amazing Stories: The Magazine of Scientification* in 1927 – science fiction was not used again as a term until 1929, when former *Amazing Stories* editor, Hugo Greenback, founded the magazine *Science Wonder Stories*. Before 1929, James argues, there was no singular or generally accepted terminology for narratives that dealt with the future or amazing inventions, and no particularly recognisable form of linking these stories to older narratives. Verne’s fantastic tales were published as *voyages extraordinaires* in France, translated into scientific romances in Britain – the term that Wells himself adopted to describe his first five novels. The sense of temporal imposition from present to past might be a way of loosening the rigidity of Brantlinger’s distinction between science fiction and realism, primarily as there was not any unified sense of science fiction. Yet also there is a slippage between the terms of Brantlinger’s definitions by these narratives that, in Wilson’s terms, elucidate the wonder of science both in terms of their structure, ordering, division methodology and style, as well as their imaginative improvisations and borrowings. It is the truth, as well as poetry, in science that excites Wilson, and therefore refers to principles of mode and method that must, in Brantlinger’s account, verge on the ‘realistic’.

It must also be acknowledged that to consider Wells’s novel in relation to the term science fiction necessitates the inclusion, of Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia* of 1516, which Suvin claims must share with *The Time Machine* its status as principle point of departure for modern science fiction.¹¹³ It is with this in mind that I intend to

interpret Wells's first novel as a very specific kind of utopian form. The discussion of Wells as a writer of utopias must recognise not only that his work has generated a substantial amount of interpretation and reflection around the theme of utopia, but that it occupies a privileged position in the field of utopian studies, particularly as the field intersects with science fiction studies. As Tom Moylan proposes, the convergence of two concurrently emergent fields, particularly in the 1960s and 70s, was driven by a shared interest in the possibility of engaging with social reality through readings of narrative fiction. In particular, this was brought about by a resurgence of interest in utopian themes in much of the science fiction writing of the period:

The resurgence of utopian writing within the textual universe of sf guaranteed that many scholars, and some writers, chose to work at the intersection of utopian and sf studies, and the affiliation of the new utopian sf with the growing oppositional culture further ensured that these twinned intellectual projects would take up the challenges of an engaged political critique.¹¹⁴

Moylan emphasises a link between emergent forms of science fiction (or 'sf') scholarship and utopian studies in the manner in which objects of study, whether they be text, community or theory, are addressed with a degree of specificity and were increasingly concerned with clarifying the formal operations by which a utopian form enters a historical moment.

I would like to briefly reconsider Moylan's framework for describing this moment in utopian studies, which through its relationship with forms of scholarship, privileges fiction from the last quarter of the twentieth century. The position of *The Time Machine* is as a distant predecessor of forms of critical utopian thought described as 'more cunning as the century moved on'.¹¹⁵ Both the forms and degrees of crises that shaped twentieth-century manifestations of the utopian imagination may be historically specific and bound to forms of neo-liberalist/conservative governments and configurations of global capitalism. However, the opening of a

temporal frontier in Wells's novel might encourage some reflection on the role of the definitive construction of time in the formation of theoretical and epistemological models.

In *The Life of Forms*, Henri Focillon argues that a quotidian normalisation of chronology has been habitually extended into historical organisations of time, as a necessary means of construction to secure the possibility of meaning. Stated intervals both classify objects and events and facilitate their interpretation. For Focillon, days, weeks and months offer the evidence of their own beginnings and endings, providing inalienable authenticity to reckonings of time:

We are exceedingly reluctant to surrender the isochronal concept of time, for we confer upon any such equal measurements not only a metrical value that is beyond dispute, but also a kind of organic authority. These measurements presently become frames, and the frames then become bodies. We personify them. Nothing, for instance, could be more curious in this respect than our concept of the century.¹¹⁶

Focillon proposes that this model of time has the tendency of shaping centuries within the ages of a human life, parenthesized by birth and death. Time is organised according to a known architectural plan, allocated galleries and display cases as in a museum, and is moulded into discrete and efficient partitions.

While I enthusiastically acknowledge Moylan's history of critical utopian thought and fiction, I would like to suggest that it is useful to apply this suspicion of (violent) historical organisation. While I do not contest the conditions for such practices, models of history and their reflection in fiction should perhaps be defined less by convenient and normative temporal boundaries. For example, one could take conditions from the long and varied nineteenth century that are as much fuel for a critical and sustained engagement with utopian thought: the transformation of living conditions under rapidly developing forms of capitalist modernity, imperial and colonial expansion, war, and constitution of subjects according to ideological extremes of class, gender and race.¹¹⁷ It need not be stated that the nineteenth century

was one that was as much characterised by utopian desire, thought and fiction. While Moylan situates the nineteenth century as a primer for the articulation and textual manifestations of critical utopian impulses in the twentieth century, this is can be countered by Francis Wheen's observation that Wells's *A Modern Utopia* 'is a creature of its time, and the fact that he wrote such a book at all shows how well attuned he was to the zeitgeist: almost a hundred Utopian fantasies were published between 1875 and 1905, an efflorescence unparalleled before or since'.¹¹⁸ Moylan, I'm sure, would beg to differ that such a prevalence of utopian fiction has remained unparalleled since the beginning of the twentieth century. However, I would like to detach Moylan's notion of a critical utopian imagination from its ontological bind with late twentieth century criticism, and reinvest it into the fiction of a more distant past.

Rather than a remote ancestor, *The Time Machine* is a more direct and immediate progenitor of a more recent body of work. Recent manifestations of a utopian imagination shared by science fiction and criticism both map the present and suggest or stimulate both psychic and social transformations. (This intersecting terrain is described thoroughly in Moylan and Baccolini's edited collection *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination* (2003).) These characteristics, that have become expectations for critical utopian thought, are already present in a sophisticated and developed form in *The Time Machine*.¹¹⁹ Perhaps more significant is my claim that while Moylan's account is clearly of a convergence of theoretical or scholarly writing and science fiction, Wells had already sought to unify such concerns within an overall practice of writing. He was aware of traditions of utopian thought, which are engaged with throughout *The Time Machine*. More generally, his fiction was inseparable from an outlook defined by his sustained interest in politics, science and the possibilities of social transformation.

My approach to describing this utopian form is to interpret *The Time Machine* as a very specific kind of object. The novel is characterised – as, I would like to suggest, are all of Wells's Scientific Romances – by the articulation of, and dependence on, a peculiarly resonant sense of materiality. The presence of materiality and material culture in the novel could be addressed as a means of

realising the imagined elsewhere, a mode of what can be described as world-building – a term that has been borrowed from Moylan.¹²⁰ This sense of mutually constitutive experiences of text and reading both further destabilises the distinction between fantasy narratives and realism, while also perhaps offers a mechanical explanation for the functional operations of science fiction stories. For Suzanne Keen, the assemblage of narrative is accounted for by the term ‘fictional world’, which constitutes the perception by a reader of the imagined materials deployed by an author. All that is denoted, implied, or described takes on a psychic manifestation as an imagined world. The appearance of allusion to a phenomenally accessible actuality that is asserted by a forms of supposedly realistic narrative is bound to, and relies upon, ‘the reader’s capacity to generate a sense of wholeness and actuality of a finite number of references.’¹²¹ A gothic romance necessitates a process of engagement in which an implied reader must imagine a world that is opposed to their own quotidian frames of reference. Likewise, a reader who had not personally visited the less hospitable streets of the East End, or the industrial centres in the north of England must also simultaneously assemble its fictional world and learns the norms implicit in its inclusions and omissions.¹²² This mutually constitutive process of textual and psychic building has the implication that in terms of exploration of the boundaries of fictional representation, the process of testing, violating and reinventing these boundaries is one that is carried out by both author and reader.

In this sense, text can of course defy, or rather must defy, and transform relationships between objects and their interpretation. Keen’s sense of a phenomenology of reading as a testing and violating of boundaries also serves her own exegesis on forms of division and boundary, shifts in time, place and mode for the sake of what can be represented only within a zone of alterity, that she describes as narrative annexes. These spaces of difference and possibility within a novel are important devices within Victorian fiction, but also provide a continuity of narrative technique from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. They prefigure ‘[m]uch of what is putatively modern about the twentieth-century novel’¹²³ by decades,

demonstrating not the radical newness of Victorian fiction, but rather this notion of narrative continuity:

Related to the 'second worlds' or 'green worlds' of early modern literary kinds, narrative annexes preserve in the Victorian novel fiction's ability to shift time place and mode for the sake of what can be represented in a specially circumscribed zone. Spenserian romance; dream-vision; Shakespeare's gardens, forests, and islands; and More's Utopia;¹²⁴

Keen posits a desire or an appetite for fictional worlds that differ explicitly from the reader's own, and cites Wolfgang Iser's *Prospecting: From Reader Response to Literary Anthropology* (1993) in suggesting that the presence of the (non-Lacanian) imaginary instigates the awareness of a difference between actual and fictional worlds.

This posited imaginary is not of a necessarily fantastic kind, but rather is constituted by the very notion of fictional world as other:

if we regard the world of the text as being bracketed off from the world it represents, it follows that that which is within the bracket is separated from the reality in which it is usually embedded. Consequently there will be a continual oscillation between the bracketed world and that from which it has been separated.¹²⁵

The bracketed world of fictional text becomes a medium that unveils what may be concealed within the world from which it has departed, that is, in the (non-Lacanian) real. The 'as if world' is necessary for bringing about this interplay. Keen points out that this 'as if world' need not be that of a fictional narrative, or even a constructed artwork of any kind. Rather, it 'may be scientific, philosophical, etc., so long as it has been constructed through a process of worldmaking, entailing composition and decomposition, weighting, ordering, deletion and supplementation, and deformation.'¹²⁶ The positing of the 'as if world' and the actual, and this generative

and revealing oscillation suggests a utopian operation of both text and object that is at the core of *The Time Machine*. This impulse might also contribute towards an understanding of, as well as an operational methodology for, hermeneutic practice.

Moylan employs his own account of world-building as a formal and logical characteristic of the mechanics of science fiction, an 'ability to generate cognitively substantial yet estranged alternative worlds'.¹²⁷ For Moylan, this is the greatest pleasure to be found in science fiction. However, he also argues that it is the source of its subversive potential:

(...)for if a reader can manage to see the world differently (in that Brechtian sense of overcoming alienation by becoming critically estranged and engaged), she or he might just, especially in concert with friends or comrades and allies, do something to alter it.¹²⁸

Moylan's sense of world-building could be read as mutually constituted by author and reader. This mechanism of imagining an elsewhere at the same time as providing a cognitive map of contemporary actuality, goes some way towards envisioning the sense of materiality that is detectable in *The Time Machine*.

However, to better understand the quality I wish to evoke, it is necessary to trace Wells's attempts to differentiate the Scientific Romances from the work of Jules Verne. Wells objected being compared to Verne - an objection that was mutually upheld by Verne himself. The distinction Wells makes between their work is very specific. He says of his own early novels:

As a matter of fact there is no literary resemblance whatever between the anticipatory inventions of the great Frenchman and these fantasies. His work dealt almost always with actual possibilities of invention and discovery, and he made some remarkable forecasts. The interest he invoked was a practical one; he wrote and believed and told that this or that thing could be done, which was not at that time done. He helped his reader to imagine it done to

realise what fun, excitement or mischief would ensue. Many of his inventions have 'come true'.¹²⁹

In contrast, Wells describes the Scientific Romances as fantasies. Rather than projecting a conceivable possibility, their conviction is analogous to that of a dream. After reading one of these novels, one wakes up to its impossibility. However, these are dreams that may not relate to technological possibility, but certainly relate to social possibility. The dream is one that takes place within a recognised and politicised configuration of social reality, which it offers a contrast to. Like that of William Guest, the protagonist and somnambulant time traveller in William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890), the dream Wells describes is one of a possible future experienced from the present.

Wells describes the 'living interest' of these novels as lying in the non-fantastic elements: '(...) the fantastic element, the strange property or the strange world, is used only to throw up and intensify our natural reactions of wonder, fear or perplexity'.¹³⁰ The invention in itself is nothing, it is only the translation of a singular fantastic element into a commonplace world that invests the narrative with the values of literary interest and engagement that Wells describes as 'human'. It is essential to isolate the fantastic, to restrict it to a singular contrivance. Wells's logic is predicated on the possibility of identification, of the sense of readers projecting themselves into the fictional circumstance and asking what might happen to them if they were in this situation:

But no one would think twice about the answer if hedges and houses also began to fly, or if people changed into lions, tigers, cats and dogs left and right, or if everyone could vanish anyhow. Nothing remains interesting where anything may happen.¹³¹

There is a correlation with Wells's rules for what constitutes the interest value in his scientific romances in Suvin's assertion that science fiction can be usefully thought of as the literature of cognitive estrangement.

This category is held up in contrast to narratives of pure fantasy, such as the folktale:

The stock folktale accessory, such as the flying carpet, evades the empirical law of physical gravity – as the hero evades social gravity – by imagining its opposite. This wish-fulfilling element is its strength and its weakness, for it never pretends that a carpet could be expected to fly – that a humble third son could be expected to become king – while there is a gravity.¹³²

In attempting a rigorous understanding of science fiction as a category of literature, Suvin's example binds a specificity of literary form to a particular relationship with materiality. I would like to read Suvin's emphasis on the conditions in which cognitive estrangement can usefully take place within literatures of the fantastic as a means of interpreting a connection between a crude sense of material possibility and social possibility, which seems latent in Wells's early utopia - *A more believable constitution of materiality and its inherent potential for transformation in text suggests a more profound impulse for change in the mind of the reader.*

In his own account of the scientific romances, Wells's own trick was to domesticate the impossible. A plausible illusion allows the story to play out, and science becomes a modern substitute for magic, which Wells thought had lost its narrative currency by the late nineteenth century: 'I simply brought the fetish stuff up to date, and made it as near actual theory as possible'.¹³³ It is worth noting that this trick, this desire to renew the conventions of fantasy was itself, nothing new, as the same desire prompted Shelley to make Victor Frankenstein a scientist, purely as a means of differentiating her story from the tired conventions of Gothic Romance.¹³⁴ But aside from the presence of trickery, Wells sees the business of the fantasy writer as maintaining a sense of reality: 'Touches of prosaic detail are imperative and a rigorous adherence to the hypothesis. Any extra fantasy outside the cardinal assumption immediately gives a touch of irresponsible silliness to the invention'.¹³⁵ Used in this precise way, fantasy holds the potential, in Wells's argument, to provide a new and novel angle on telling stories which themselves

might be discursively revealing. Yet, as previously discussed, this methodology might well fit Brantlinger's account of an epistemological presence of science within nineteenth-century realism. If so, it is held within the thrall of non-realist narrative traditions. Wells admits the presence of his admiration for Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* throughout the Scientific Romances as a profound influence, 'and it is particularly evident in a predisposition to make the stories reflect upon contemporary political and social discussions'.¹³⁶

Writing soon after Wells's death, Jorge Luis Borges also set out to distinguish Wells from Verne. He writes that Wells 'bestowed sociological parables with a lavish hand'.¹³⁷ Yet it is Borges's own poem *Things* that might be equally appropriate in characterising the Scientific Romances:

My cane, my pocket change, this ring of keys,
The obedient lock, the belated notes,
The few days left to me will not find time
To read, the deck of cards, the table-top,
A book encrusted in its pages the withered
Violet, monument to an afternoon
Undoubtedly unforgettable, now forgotten,
the mirror in the west where a red sunrise
blazes its illusion. How many things,
files, doorsills, atlases, nails,
serve us like slaves who never say a word,
blind and so mysteriously reserved.
They will endure beyond our vanishing;
And they will never know that we have gone.¹³⁸

Borges thematises a range and scope of material culture beyond any simplistic notions that artefacts carry semiotic meanings. Rather the poem suggests that notions of self are bound up with seemingly trivial, but invasively intimate, things. Similarly, I would like to suggest that while *The Time Machine* is a utopian

discourse of social conflict and possibility, it also constitutes a sense of materiality. It needs to be stressed that this quality is not limited to definitions of relationships with things but, as in Borges' poem, materiality concerns the nature of subjects, rather than merely a static notion of objects.

In referring to the text of a novel as my material world, it seems appropriate to think through some forms of authorship in order to attempt to describe the presence of materiality and material culture within this world. The use of the term 'authorship' here is derived from accounts by Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida.¹³⁹ As formative impulses that underlie the loosely-bound terrain of poststructuralist thought, it might be stated that these are hardly contentious, and might even appear as somewhat self evident. However, this very appearance of obviousness makes possible the relegating of any need for an attentive return, and threatens to blunt the discursive edge of criticism. In all these readings of authorship and text, I would like to suggest not only an analytical trajectory that informs my reading of *The Time Machine* as a novel, but also the substitution of textual language with the notion of materiality and material culture.

Barthes' model of the Death of the Author is useful and constructive in this context. His text functions as a means of articulating an unstable model of authorship with no small amount of currency, primarily through his identification of an author as an ideological construct. In describing a passage from Balzac's story *Sarrasine*, Barthes asks who is speaking, whose opinion and voice is represented:

We shall never know, for the good reason that writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing.¹⁴⁰

The ontological, bodily, authentic author is lost within the codified substances of text and language. This process is mirrored as a multiple effect in the text of *The Time Machine*, as the narrative is narrated once by the Time Traveller to a living,

present audience in his home, and then again, directly to the reader, by Hillyer, the novel's outer narrator:

As soon as fact is *narrated* no longer with a view to acting directly on reality but intransitively, that is to say, finally outside of any function other than that of the very practice of the symbol itself, this disconnection occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins.¹⁴¹

To believe in an author is to conceive of him (and in his essay, it is always a him – further highlighting the status of ideological construction) as the past of his own book. The author is thought to suffer for it, live for it, to nourish the book, like a father to a child. This idea that the author is regarded as the Father and owner is important, as it identifies an ideological imperative in the affirmation of the author. This immediately provides the text with a social and cultural set of contextual conditions, rendering it analogous to the reading of any other material world in terms of what objects might mean, their meanings being determined by their positions within such contexts.

Yet such a notion of paternal authorship seems incongruous in relation to how material culture might be read. The life of an object, and its place in the lives of subjects and societies, is not inscribed from above, but is, perhaps, a continuous process of writing and reflection; the material thing being shaped by, while shaping, those who encounter it. This is an intuitive reading made possible by Barthes' alternative model of authorship – the scriptor. The scriptor is born with the text, rather than preceding or exceeding the writing. The idea of origin is questioned here. The scriptor makes a gesture of inscription, not expression, in a text that is conceptualised as a field that has no origin other than language. Instead of coming from elsewhere, content comes from language. This once radical enquiry not only rethinks the position of author, and provides a resonant and convincing set of possibilities for reading text and thinking through its significations and relationships, but is also suggestive of readings of material culture that could be equally illuminating. Like text, material culture itself is generative, giving birth to forms of

voice, such as authorship, shaping the interpretative structures around it, determining contexts, functioning within and breaking rules and codes.

Our relationship with materiality and material culture is one of co-existing in an unprivileged simultaneity, not one element pre-or-antecedent the other. The slippery openness of such a description is echoed in Barthes; for him the idea of deciphering a limited, final meaning is futile. It has been convenient to literary criticism to find this meaning, to uncover an author and explain the text. This is of principle importance to my reading of Wells. There is no attempt to uncover material culture as a locked secret, or a final meaning, but rather the aim is to draw out the presence of one aspect of the language of the text. Once identified, again, there is no attempt to suggest a definitive interpretation of its presence within the text. Barthes' pairing of the reign of the author as being one in the same as the reign of the critic who has the final say couldn't be more appropriate in my efforts to avoid writing a piece of literary criticism. Barthes' notion of disentangling a text, rather than deciphering it, is of primary significance. There is no ultimate, secret, meaning that I need to unlock, rather the suggestive presence of something that seems both of significance in thinking through Wells's novel, and that may be useful in thinking through a more general and universal sense of materiality and material culture.

For Foucault, the coming into being of the notion of 'author' constitutes the privileged moment of *individualization* in the history of ideas. Foucault's approach is to historicise what appears natural, to give a history to dominant cultural ways of thinking that give the appearance of having always been so. Foucault says that the author is a certain functional principle which imposes limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, it impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation of fiction. It is a kind of regulatory device that our culture imposes upon forms of creative activity, enabling fiction to take place within a set of rules that can themselves be regulated by the those who might be in a position to do so:¹⁴²

Referring only to itself, but without being restricted to the confines of its interiority, writing is identified with its own unfolded exteriority. This means that it is an interplay of signs arranged less according to its signified content

than according to the very nature of the signifier. Writing unfolds like a game (*jeu*) that invariably goes beyond its own rules and transgresses its limits. In writing, the point is not to manifest or exalt the act of writing, nor is it to pin a subject within language; it is, rather, a question of creating a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears.¹⁴³

Foucault may be read here as celebrating an emancipation from the dimension of expression in this apparent disappearance of the subject. However, this account of writing is closer to a space of becoming. That this disappearance into the space of writing is constant and necessarily repetitive, rather than static or permanent, depicts an author that is both present and absent within text. This space of becoming is one that is both inexorably tied to, and analogous to, materiality and material culture as a space of interdependence between subject and object.

The writing subject may constantly disappear, but is not absent. Without one, it would seem hard to imagine a text stabilised as a unified 'work' that can be distinguished from the rest of the world:

Consequently, it is not enough to declare that we should do without the writer (the author) and study the work itself. The word *work* and the unity that it designates are probably as problematic as the status of the author's individuality.¹⁴⁴

Following from this suggestion, I would like to maintain Wells as a presence within my analysis. Rather than effacing him altogether, he will appear explicitly, as an unstable yet necessary and informative presence. However, any notion of his authorial supremacy will be resisted, as will an excessive tendency towards clarity of intention or biographical explanation, although both these forces are in play within a reading of *The Time Machine*. It is not enough, Foucault maintains, to keep repeating the affirmation that the author has disappeared:

Instead, we must locate the space left empty by the author's disappearance, follow the distribution of gaps and breaches, and watch for the openings that this disappearance uncovers.¹⁴⁵

Foucault's argument is one that preserves the author as a privileged figure in the life of the text, while simultaneously describing a space in which the author is not present as an ontological source of origin and authenticity. Such a space as this virtual disappearance creates, I would like to suggest, makes possible the re-reading of space within text, as one of materiality and material culture. Again, the destabilization of authorship opens up a deregulated space of interpretation, precisely because there is no clearly defined sense of differentiation between text, materiality, and subject, but there is instead an ongoing and reiterative interdependence.

The account of this mutually constitutive activity is also addressed in a passage from *On Grammatology*. Derrida discusses the act of writing, or any form of the inscription of meaning through a medium, as reliant upon a culturally specific system of language that cannot be dominated by an author. A critical reading must look for a relationship between what an author does or does not command, therefore enabling the production, through reading, of a signifying structure:

The writer writes in a language and in a logic whose proper system, laws, and life his discourse by definition cannot dominate absolutely. He uses them only by letting himself, after a fashion and up to a point, be governed by the system. And the reading must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the language that he uses. This relationship is not a certain quantitative distribution of shadow and light, of weakness or of force, but a signifying structure that critical reading should *produce*.¹⁴⁶

The term *production* suggests a link to the world of materiality and objects. In this instance however, while it is suggestive simultaneously of the making of artefacts or

goods, to forces of economic production, it refers specifically to a search for signification. So it is the reader again who is in a position of responsibility, but rather than making meaning, the reader must identify the differences between what might come from an author, what might come from the surrounding culture and society, and what might come from the traditions and rules of the format. It is in acts of critical reading that meaning must be produced from a text. It is this position, which in a sense appears as a resolution between the previous two, that this thesis finds its model for acts of critical reading. This act of critical reading is one that here will not only be of a text, but rather a critical reading that will allow text to be read as material culture.

The definitions that Wells has furnished of his early novels, including the analogy that they are like a dream, that upon finishing one of them, one wake's up to its impossibility, come from a text that was first published as a preface to a collection of his *Scientific Romances* in 1933, and which has come to stand as something of an authoritative account of this body of work. The readings within it are suggested from a significantly retroactive position, that allows these early works to be situated within a precise contextual configuration that includes Wells's general career up to that point. Wells takes issue with criticism of his work in this text in a manner that is revealing. He eschews the description of 'the English Jules Verne', and places his fantasies amongst 'a class of writing which includes the *Golden Ass* of *Apuleius*, the *True Histories of Lucien*, *Peter Schlemil* and the story of *Frankenstein*. It includes too some of the admirable inventions by Mr David Garnett, *Lady into Fox* for instance.'¹⁴⁷ That they can be coherently grouped together as a set of closely related novels is itself of importance. It affirms the shared properties that I would like to emphasise in this thesis: their reliance on a constitutive and reflective set of properties that could be imagined as materiality and material culture. Yet here, Wells makes it clear that the point of such qualities is never reduced to that of pure narrative entertainment, but rather in order to critically engage with social reality.

Wells emphasises the presence of Swift within his scientific romances: 'it is particularly evident in a predisposition to make the stories reflect upon

contemporary political and social discussions.’¹⁴⁸ While Wells admires Swift for his use of narrative as the medium of reflection, he is somewhat belligerent in not fixating upon the form of his earlier writing in relation to his more openly polemical and political works in the early 1930s:

It is an incurable habit with literary critics to lament some lost artistry and innocence in my early work and to accuse me of having become polemical in my later years. That habit is of such old standing that the late Mr Zangwill in a review in 1895 complained that my first book, *The Time Machine*, concerned itself with ‘our present discontents’. *The Time Machine* is indeed quite as philosophical and polemical and critical of life and so forth, as *Men like Gods* written twenty-eight years later. No more and no less. I have never been able to get away from life in the mass and life in general as distinguished from life in the individual experience, in any book I have ever written. I differ from contemporary criticism in finding them inseparable.¹⁴⁹

The temporal distance between these reflections and the writing of the novels would also seem to allow a broader set of genre contexts than was available at the time of their writing. Yet, Wells seems to avoid bringing his early novels into propinquity with recognisable forms of science fiction. It is also worth considering that by 1933, it was possible to recognise some form of science fiction cinema: Georges Méliès’ *Le Voyage de la Lune* (1902), René Clair’s *Paris Qui Dort* (1925), Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*, (1927) James Whale’s *Frankenstein* (1931), Dr Jekyll and Mister Hyde (1931), and James Whales’ adaptation of Wells’s own *The Invisible Man* (1933). Wells himself was to go on to write for film when he adapted his novel *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933) as the screenplay for *Things to Come* (1936), directed by William Cameron Menzies.

Instead Wells emphasises satire and Swift. On the one hand, he seems to miss the radical specificity of science fiction as a means to contextualise his practice. Yet on the other, he is still inventing it. Although in this preface he fails to historicise the genre as it solidified and diversified in the early twentieth century, I’d

argue that his sense of the tradition is focused through such an awareness. After all, it is the popularity of the twentieth century science fiction that is keeping his stories in print and generating the demand for new editions, such as the collection he is prefacing here. However, the temporal distance may also hint at a more complex understanding of the dream of his narrative worlds from which one awakes, as something that is not discrete and contained by the hours of sleep, but rather as a constitutive and symptomatic force that cannot be dismissed as mere reverie, but rather is central to notions of both individual subjectivity and society. It is, perhaps, a dream that can be rearticulated as utopian impulse.

For Wells, the desire to move beyond boundaries, and the imagination of change, was not only bound to the fate of humanity, but was personal. There is a form of redemptive movement, both redemptive and transgressive, that is performed biographically as well as through Wells's output. Wells was the first to recognise this affinity, and his life was dramatised as textual narrative in *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934).¹⁵⁰ This was a means for Wells to both provide his own interpretative commentaries on his practice as a writer, and to contextualise his writing within a self-made textual mythology. It provides an extraordinary account of Wells, but has of course been accompanied by other forms of biographical work concerning themselves with his life, such as these recent inclusions: Michael Foot's *H. G. : The History of Mr. Wells* (1995), (Foot was able to draw on his memories of a friendship with Wells.) and Vincent Brome's *H. G. Wells: A Biography* (2001) which together with notes by Parrinder and Lawton,¹⁵¹ collectively contribute to my own extremely brief account of his life.

Herbert George (or Bertie, as he was known) was born in Bromley, Kent,¹⁵² on 21 September 1866 into a family that teetered precariously on the edge of financial and personal insolvency. Despite early signs of academic success and a voracious literary, historical and scientific curiosity, Wells was taken out of school at the age of thirteen so that he might earn his own income. Between 1881 and 1883, Wells's endured a tedious and disastrous run of apprenticeships that lasted until he was able to find his way into a teaching assistant position at Midhurst Grammar School in West Sussex. In 1884 he subsequently won a scholarship to the

Normal School of Science (Now Imperial College) to study biology under T.H. Huxley. That such an opportunity existed was due to the slow process of reform initiated by the Education Act of 1871. When he left in 1887, Wells took up a post as a science master in a school in North Wales, where he was knocked down by a student during a football match and suffered severe kidney and lung injury. After months of convalescence, he continued teaching biology, predominantly for the University Correspondence College. He married his cousin Isabel in 1891, but the relationship was not a successful one, and by 1893, Wells was living (scandalously) with Amy Catherine Robbins (referred to by Wells as 'Jane'), who had been one of his students. They were married two years later after his divorce from Isabel was finally agreed.

He began publishing his writing in the first issue of *Science Schools Journal* in December 1886 (not, as John Lawton claims, in May 1887).¹⁵³ His first article, an essay titled 'Socrates', saw Wells, publishing under the name Herbert G. Wells, posing as successor to Plato's narrating philosopher in *The Republic*. It is odd reading 'Socrates' in the light of his speculative and utopian writing. It reads as a history, but prefigures his later works on futurity. The past is read in terms of the present, much as he was later to read invented futures. He reads the past in terms of 'utility' and 'profit', an approach with which he would also read the future. As Stover's account of this earliest published essay indicates,¹⁵⁴ this apparently caused some umbrage amongst his fellow students, after which Wells used a series of pseudonyms when writing in the *Science Schools Journal*, to provide a degree of distance and anonymity, albeit with a negligible effectiveness, with which he could express ideas that might be seen as both pretentious and contentious. After all, who else, I would like to suggest, would constitute his readership other than the student body who he had so offended with his immodesty?

The content of an issue of *Science Schools Journal* was diverse to say the least. It acted as a site for a range of different interests and accounts. As well as an obituary to a late professor, the contents for the first issue includes articles on 'The Existing Distress Not Due to Over-Population', 'On the Structure and Homology of the Pineal Gland', 'Fingers and Fins', 'The Refreshment Room Club', 'Some

Customs and Manners of China' and 'Sports' – the latter being a list of recent results in football, rugby and swimming competitions. Additionally, in the editorial for the first edition, 'To the Average Man', Wells sets out to establish a relationship between knowledge and writing, establishing the complete dissolution within Wells's practice of Brantlinger's opposition between realism that follows a scientific methodology, and fiction that takes as its diegetic contrivance some principle culled from scientific discourse or technology: 'Clearness of perception, imagination, and order are alike *the* mental requirements of the scientist and the writer.'¹⁵⁵ This is followed by a passage of some urgency that makes an evocative claim for the necessity of writing itself:

That our fellow-students have no time for writing, which implies that they are committing to memory classified facts without opportunity for exercise in the re-sorting and displaying thereof; that, like athletes who, professing to train, merely eat, they are fraudulently cramming; or, that they are incapable of writing, which (as above hinted) condemns the whole magnificent examination fabric of the Science and Art Department.¹⁵⁶

Another student essay, 'Mammon' represents an early musing on the subject of utopia. Wells published the essay under the name Walter Glockenhammer. The piece ends with an editorial note that makes fun of his use of an assumed identity, characteristic of the somewhat crude humour that appears in his earliest work:

Such inquiry as we have been able to make fails to discover further evidence of the existence of Mr. Glockenhammer. Will he oblige us, in strict confidence, with his real name.¹⁵⁷

Leon Stover emphasises the pretentious nature of 'Mammon', which 'is of course not diminished by assigning it a foolish byline'.¹⁵⁸

The structure of *Science Schools Journal* prefigures the format of Wells's serialised publications. It is, in fact, not only the site of his first serialised fiction, but

also the site of the earliest version of *The Time Machine*. The story is barely recognisable, and it was never actually completed. Titled 'The Chronic Argonauts', it was published in three parts in 1888. Wells submitted the story after he had left the Normal School of Science in 1887, and it saw the return to print of Wells's own name, which was formalised here for the first time as H.G. Wells. It was at the same time that he also published an essay of scientific speculation, 'The Fourth Dimension', which formalised Wells's recognition that time was a medium that needed to be exposed to speculation and reimagining. It is telling that he did so concurrently with this gothic romance that explored the same idea through narrative fiction. These three episodes, which leave the story incomplete, are the only version of the story available, running to about 9000 words. Two further attempts to develop the story have since been lost. However as John Lawton points out there is an account of their content available through Wells's friend, Professor A. Morley Davies, who recalled the content of one of the subsequent tales concerned with upper and lower worlds in far futurity and two subspecies of humanity, while another depicted a future world ruled by an elite through the use of mass hypnosis to control the masses.¹⁵⁹

It is therefore possible to see some germs of the specific situation that the final version of the Time Traveller ultimately encounters in the novel. However, the time traveller in *The Chronic Argonauts* is quite unlike the scientifically curious, and generally benevolent, inventor who undertakes a journey to the future in *The Time Machine*. Dr Moses Nebogipfel is odd in appearance, mysterious, alienated and closer in demeanour to Griffin, the mad scientist who transforms his body in *The Invisible Man*. Wells names this time traveller, somewhat clumsily, through two biblical references. One is obviously to the long-lived Moses, while the peculiar Nebogipfel suggests Mount Nebo, which appears in the Old Testament. This act of naming prefigures the later classification of one of humanity's future descendents – the Eloi – with a more specific set of codifications, which will be described subsequently.

The story situates him in a makeshift laboratory in Llyddwdd, a remote Welsh village. It seems likely that the story was written or at least originated during

Wells's own stay in Wells, and so perhaps was a less than subtly veiled reflection of his own relationship to social and physical context. He is alienated from the local population of villagers, a subject of mystery and dreadful threat. People fear him and suspect him of murder. Not only is he severed from mankind, but his home is the centre of:

a constant flux of crates filled with grotesquely contorted glassware, cases of brazen and steel instruments, huge coils of wire, vast iron and fire-clay implements, of inconceivable purpose, jars and phials labelled in black and scarlet – POISON, huge packages of books, and gargantuan rolls of cartridge paper, which set towards his Llyddwdd quarters from the outer world.¹⁶⁰

This modern-gothic feel is somewhat comedic, particularly in retrospect. The establishing scenario 'resembles nothing quite so much as the point of every Universal horror film, from *Frankenstein* to *Abbott and Costello meet the Wolfman*.'¹⁶¹ There is something of Wells's early humour here, characteristic of his student writing, such as Mammon. It was an aspect he was to learn to channel with more subtlety and to greater effect by the time he became a novelist. Rather than feel a need to emphasise his knowledge and humour, naming became, by the stage of the recognisable versions of *The Time Machine* something both more philosophical and visceral.

As Lawton points out, *The Time Machine* was Wells's first novel, but it was not his first book.¹⁶² By the time of the publication of the first edition of the novel, he was living as a writer. He had been writing professionally for the *Fortnightly Review* since the publication of his first article - outside of a student publication - in 1891, 'The Rediscovery of the Unique'. Prior to this, Wells had failed to convince editor Frank Harris to publish his 'The Universe Rigid', in which he speculated on time as Four-Dimensional geometry. In 1893 Wells published *A Textbook of Biology*, which remained in print for over forty years. Wells was already, and very much needed to continue, writing for money. By this time, his health problems were so severe that it was, at least temporarily, impossible for Wells to continue teaching,

and he therefore had to rely entirely on his income through writing for publication. James points out, as there was no self-conscious genre until 1929, (and as we have seen even then one not recognised by Wells writing in 1933) when writers chose to produce work that broke out of the mimetic form of realism, there must have been clear reasons for doing so. The first of these, according to James, was that writers wished to express future possibility:

warning of the possibility of a French invasion, or of the chaos that would result from Irish Home Rule or from allowing women the vote, or, alternatively, advocating the desirability of living in a socialist future, or a society in which technological advances had made life easier and happier for the majority of citizens.¹⁶³

Secondly, writers were attracted to science fiction because there was amongst them a clear recognition of an audience that could make fantasy fiction pay:

They knew, as commercially-minded authors, that there was a growing audience for romance and adventure, for tales of the marvellous and the exotic, whether those tales were set on the uncharted frontiers of the British Empire, or the mysterious jungles of Central America, or the red plains of Mars.¹⁶⁴

The commercial impulse is no doubt present in Wells's writing of *The Time Machine*, yet as the Victorian science fiction writer W.H. Hudson, cited by James, states: Romances of the future, however fantastic they may be... are born of a very common feeling – a sense of dissatisfaction with the existing order of things, combined with a vague faith or hope of a better one to come.¹⁶⁵ Less a reiteration of the Blochian utopian impulse, more its pre-figuration.

The evolution of *The Time Machine* as an artefact in the present provides a convoluted narrative. In the most general sense, the texts/objects to which I refer when discussing *The Time Machine* are something of a composite, but ultimately, I

am referring to it as a very short single-volume novel, in the form of the Heinemann (London) first edition. This is the version from which I quote and that I posit as the ontologically binding document of the novel. Good contemporary printings of the novel are studiously derived from this via a convoluted route, such as John Lawton's Centennial Edition for Everyman, and Patrick Parrinder's superb very recent Penguin edition. John Lawton traces the genealogy of this version as based upon the 1935 Everyman edition, which was in turn based on a revised version that appeared in the *Gollancz Collected Scientific Romances* of 1933, for which Wells wrote his revealing preface. This revised text contained small modifications from the version of *The Time Machine* published in *Collected Short Stories* from 1927. This derives from the *Essex Collected* of 1926-7 vol.16. which is itself based on the *Atlantic Collected* of 1924 vol. I.

The first impression of the novel was published in Britain by Heinemann and in the USA by Holt. These two versions are not the same, and the Holt has led to some speculation that it was put together before the original serialization as it is thought to be incomplete. The American first edition is also significantly different to the latter definitive versions from the 1930s onwards. In particular, the introductory section of the novel, while describing the same basic scenario as the London edition, is a different text altogether. It is less subtle, evocative and missing the very characteristics that I will go on to describe in subsequent chapters from the earliest passages of the book. It was the Heinemann that was chosen by Wells to be revised for the 1924 Atlantic Edition, which he then read as the definitive version, despite having made some further minor revisions for the 1927 version. The revisions from this period were brought together in the Random House edition, which was illustrated by W.A Diggins.

The text suffered from various reprints that were inaccurately transcribed and poorly proof-read, and the Random House edition has served as a consistent point of reference for the stability of a text whose fabric has altered, albeit in with minor distinctions, over the past century. The text was further multiplied in its variations when in 1946, as a gesture to mark Wells's 80th birthday, Penguin re-issued the 1895 edition. In 1960, Dover republished the 1895 edition in the USA together with a

section of text that had been cut after serialisation. John Lawton's 1995 Centennial edition (Reprinted in 2000 – the date of my own copy) based upon the 1935 Everyman edition, itself derived twice removed from the 1924 Atlantic, regards this edition as the model. This is in part based upon the same assertion by David Lake, whose work in the late 1980s identified changes across the versions. The 1995 Centennial edition for Everyman is a corrected version of the 1994 Everyman, which served as an example of the accumulation of errors that had built up over time. Lawton checked this version against the Gollancz 1933, and any anomalies or suspicions were then tested against the *Atlantic*, Heinemann and occasionally the *Essex Collected*. Lawton states that his is an error-free edition of the story, not 'the 'definitive Wells''.¹⁶⁶ According to Parrinder, Lawton's Centennial edition does not improve upon the Random House text. He argues that it is a Penguin version of Wells's *Selected Short Stories*, containing *The Time Machine*, which was 'arguably, closer to Wells's final intentions than any of its predecessors except Random House'.¹⁶⁷

It becomes clear that many of these versions of *The Time Machine* present the work not as a singular novel, but as a short story. Parrinder comments on this as evinced by the amendment of the Heinemann's chapter structure, reduced to 12 in the Atlantic edition, with chapter titles deleted. By removing this structuration, Parrinder suggests 'he had come to regard it as an expanded tale or novella, rather than a novel divided into named chapters.'¹⁶⁸ It is therefore presumptive on my part to continue to refer to it as a novel. Yet I justify this specifically by referring to a singular version of the text. Despite Wells's ongoing corrections, which were largely due to the mistakes made in subsequent printings of the story, the Heinemann is in my view the closest that one can get to the actual original version of the novel. The Heinemann is also the choice of Leon Stover, whose extraordinary close readings in his 1996 edition of *The Time Machine* inform much of the critical insight that I draw upon in reading this novel.¹⁶⁹ In its singular form, although short, it seems justifiable to refer to it a novel in the form of a singular volume of text. Its current status as commodified artefact also suggests that it is currently consumed as a novel.

It is necessary to acknowledge the origins of *The Time Machine* in serialisation. However, rather than interpret this as a preferred form for Wells, it is my assertion that this staggered form was one that provided an opportunity to publish the novel. This is opposed to the Heinemann being read as a collection of an ontologically prioritised serial. It was primarily an economic necessity, and a publishing convention of the time, for Wells to publish in this way. Publishing fiction in instalments took hold in the early decades of the nineteenth century within British publishing as a means for publishers to stay solvent, and to open the market for readers who might be reluctant or unable to afford the price of cloth-bound novel.¹⁷⁰ By the 1890s, serialised fiction was economically most useful as a method of testing the popularity of a story and an author before mass producing their work as an affordable single volume.

While I acknowledge the attempts of Wells and others to constitute the definitive or accurate forms of *The Time Machine*, it is to the Heinemann, the form most viably claimed as a singular artefact, that I refer unless otherwise stated. Most published variations present only minor differences: I have noticed colons in the Heinemann that are, for example in the Penguin (2005) and Everyman (1995) semi-colons. These are, as far as I can tell, Wells's own amendments. The repeated use of hyphenation (a stylistic preference of Wells in 1895, but not 1924), such as in 'weather-worn', has been largely removed, instead leaving the phrase reading as a less cluttered 'weather worn'.

The other form of difference between the Heinemann and, as a specific and most recent point of reference, the Penguin (2005) is what I would describe as an architecture of the page: there are, as a loose guide, approximately 8 words per line, with 26 lines, on a page of the Heinemann. This makes roughly 208 words on an average given page, over 152 pages of story. This is comparable to 11 words per line, with 38 lines, estimates of 418 words per average page, and 89 pages of narrative in the Penguin 2005 edition. This creates a qualitative spatial difference. The Heinemann is much more intimate in its form. It feels compact but strangely inhabitable. The pages are physically small, particularly in height when compared to the format of a contemporary paperback novel. The font is smaller, but the

phenomenological effect of this is to allow a greater sense of space between lines. In reading, one is drawn into the limited information available on the pages, as a discreet and distinct space. This also, of course, necessitates the act of page turning at a more accelerated pace than required by a more recent edition.

The accelerated pace would also have been a quality of reading a serialized episode of *The Time Machine*, which then would have been interrupted by the need to wait for the following issue of the host periodical. After *Chronic Argonauts* was published, Wells continued to rework the story, gradually accumulating elements that would be ultimately retained in its Heinemann form. In 1894, the *National Observer* published sections of a narrative between March and June. It was left unfinished when the commissioner, W.R. Henley, left to take up a post as editor at the *New Review*. He re-commissioned Wells in December 1894. The Story ran as a monthly serial in *New Review* from January to May 1895. The singular book version was also published in May 1895 by William Heinemann, publisher of *New Review*. The serialisation already had a chapter structure rather than being structured according to the five published episodes. The notable difference between the serial and the novel was the omission of a section of text that Henley has seemed to have wanted in the serialisation, but that Wells clearly did not, as he omitted it from the Heinemann and all subsequent printings. It was originally part of Chapter 14 of the serialisation. It seems that Henley wanted this as textual padding, or as Wells puts it, 'to put a little 'writing' into the tale'.¹⁷¹ This is perhaps an editor's attention to making more full an edition of *New Review*. It reads now as an unnecessary and interruptive addition to the flow of Wells's narrative.

The story of *The Time Machine*, is hereby summarised: Hillyer, the narrator, or more appropriately, the 'outer narrator', is a friend and regular guest of the central protagonist. Referred to only as 'the Time Traveller', he could be described as the 'inner narrator', whose account is contained within that of the 'outer narrator'. In the 1931 Random House edition, this distinction is marked in an unusual but satisfying manner; the text of the outer narrator is printed in brown ink, while the inner voice of the Time Traveller is in black. Hillyer's narration begins with a scene in the Time Traveller's home, where in front of an audience of guests, the Time Traveller

attempts to describe time in terms of a speculative theory of four dimensionality. He then reveals a miniature but fully operational time machine. Before the assembled guests, the machine vanishes, to a suspicious and incredulous response. After stating his intention of travelling in time, he reveals the actual machine housed in his workshop, not yet complete. The following week, another group of guests, which includes Hillyer, have assembled at the Time Traveller's house. They wait impatiently as their host has not yet arrived, and sit down to dinner without him. Suddenly, the Time Traveller makes a dramatic entrance, demanding food and drink, disturbingly haggard in appearance. He explains that he has been to the future and from this point, the 'inner narrator' takes over as he relates the events of his journey. That morning, he had tried out his machine in a reckless and unprepared leap into the future, arriving in the year 802,701.

The future world that he encounters is a landscape punctuated by ruined, palatial structures and populated by the descendants of late nineteenth-century humans. After this huge period of time, humanity has evolved into two distinguishable species: The Eloi and the Morlocks. The Eloi are regarded by the Time Traveller as beautiful, androgynous, physically frail, and as intellectually regressive. All their material needs are catered for by the subterranean, ape-like Morlocks. As the Time Traveller eventually deduces, the Eloi are cattle reared by the Morlocks as food. The Time Traveller also discovers that his machine has vanished, dragged inside the base of a statue by Morlocks, and its recovery becomes the focus of the Time Traveller's activities in the future. He eventually succeeds in finding it and makes a frantic escape, accidentally hurtling even further into the future. He finds himself on the shore of a sea in a world that continually faces a static and bloated red sun, watching the final generations of the last forms of life on earth. This scene of a grotesque sunset populated by bizarre creatures is literally the twilight of the earth and its life. The Time Traveller then begins his return journey.

Upon his return, the voice of the novel then switches back to the 'outer narrator', Hillyer. After the Time Traveller tells his story to an entertained but unconvinced audience, Hillyer returns the following day, unable to come to a conclusion as to whether or not the story was true. He meets the Time Traveller,

with a camera and knapsack, apparently preparing for another journey. Hillyer is asked to wait for him, but manages by chance to see the faint image of the time machine disappearing, the Time Traveller an indistinct figure in a whirling mass as he disappears. Hillyer explains in his account that he waited at the Time Traveller's house for his return but then feared that he would have to wait a lifetime, and that three years had now passed. As an epilogue, Hillyer imagines what could have become of his friend, comforted by two shrivelled white flowers of an unknown order, material evidence brought back from the future. With this ending begins the discussion of the novel as a textual/material world.

Chapter 3: The Material Presence of Bodies in *The Time Machine*.

If the suggested qualities of materiality and material culture under examination here relate not only to recognisably object-based artefacts but also to notions of selfhood and the construction of individuals and cultures, then it must also take into account the terrain of anatomically defined bodies as sites of investigation. I'd like to argue that implicit in this process of identifying the body as a form of material culture is also the identification of text as an integral site of the body. Not only does the acknowledgement of anatomical corporeality as a form of material culture render the analysis of text an unproblematic approach for thinking about material culture in general, it suggests some degree of necessity in such a task. It is necessary in that text is implicated not just as a means of representing bodies, but as a site for the manifestation and materialisation of bodies. It is a place where it can be argued that the body is located.

While this chapter is an attempt to make such an assertion explicit within the fabric of the text of *The Time Machine*, this account of the body in text is in need of some initial clarification. For this purpose I'd like to draw upon Mary Douglas's argument concerning what she describes as 'the two bodies'; a description of a subject's singular body as something that might be more accurately described as two. Douglas suggests that the body, no matter how reducible to anatomical, biological and phenomenological definition, can only be expressed through social systems. The physical body is constrained by the social body. Building upon Marcel Mauss's work on theorising bodies as social forms, Douglas sustains his critique of the very idea of straightforwardly natural behaviour. Actions carry the imprint of learning; from feeding to sex: 'Nothing is more essentially transmitted by a social process of learning than sexual behaviour, and this of course is closely related to morality.'¹⁷² Yet she states that his denial of natural behaviour is confusing and that the relation between nature and culture is falsely posed. Douglas, instead, attempts to identify a natural, that is universal and unconscious, tendency to express certain situations in appropriate bodily styles:

The forms it adopts in movement and repose express social pressures in manifold ways. The care that is given to it, in grooming, feeding and therapy, the theories about what it needs in the way of sleep and exercise, about the stages it should go through, the pains it can stand, its spans of life, all the cultural categories in which it is perceived, must correlate closely with the categories in which society is seen in so far as these also draw upon the same culturally processed idea of the body.¹⁷³

Natural expressions of bodily movement therefore take place, which are culturally determined.

The body, as such, is therefore more accurately defined as 'the two bodies'. Between these two is a continual exchange of meanings. In this process, each body reinforces the category of the other. In thinking about the part it might play within this scheme, fiction could be an integral component in one of those categories. It serves to express the body as a restricted medium comprised of a set of processes. If this principle is taken as sound, then the expression of bodies through text requires no great conceptual leap. If the body is indeed a materially and socially constituted form, recognisable in its status as an aspect of material culture, I would like to suggest that the complex and concrete manifestations that appear in *The Time Machine* help to prove the status of this form as depending upon and existing within text. The novel not only contains depictions of bodies, but constitutes one half of a set of bodies, which although never existing in an anatomically verifiable state, take as their reference a world that is very real.

Bodies, as they are discussed here as forms within *The Time Machine*, enact, prefigure and echo modes of conceptualising corporeal materiality as textual in relationships that not only refuse to privilege a primacy of the referent, but complicate the very equation of signifier and signified. The discursive terrain into which I introduce Wells's treatment of embodied subjects is mapped in the form of a detailed but broad overview by Vicki Kirby. Rather than retaining value as irresolvable oppositions, Kirby suggests rather that ideality and materiality are

emeshed and empowered in a writing together of traces, resulting in the altering of both.¹⁷⁴ Kirby reiterates Saussure's argument that the substance of reality, what might be taken in the most general sense as the referent, is produced through language. Rather than itself acting as the determining precursor of meaning, the meaning of the referent itself is determined through language.

Despite a contradiction within the argument of Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), in which there is a conflation of signified concept with thing or object, Kirby places an emphasis on reading within *Course* distinctions and boundaries as inscribed by language forming the appearance of meaning objects in the world. Kirby moves towards a resolution of this contradiction through a reminder of the need to maintain the referent, while simultaneously calling into question its status as generative origin – the identity of the sign characterised by unending referral yet positioned against the transparency of reality's apparent immediacy.¹⁷⁵ This resolution forms an origin in its own right, as a constitutive referent for relationships between sign/text and object/body. From this originary signified can be traced of Saussurian semiology, a science of signs of which linguistics are only a part, through to Barthes' reversely corrective system of semiology as a part of linguistics. Yet this is still a discrete and closed system, one that Kirby seeks to overturn, in keeping with familiar history, with an expanded sense of writing made possible through arche-writing. As a sign, writing as it is accounted for in Derrida's *Of Grammatology* is no longer just a literary notion because its purview extends to cinematography, choreography, the pictorial, the musical, the sculptural, the athletic, the military, the political, and 'the entire field covered by the cybernetic program'.¹⁷⁶

I will return to Derrida's *Of Grammatology* in the final chapter of this thesis. For now, I will posit here from Kirby's argument what she describes as the 'anti-essentialism' that characterises structuralist and post-structuralist accounts of the limitless play of the signifier. However, this very assertion disavows itself in an essentialist conceptualization of matter. The dismantling of this spurious opposition is mirrored as an intention of my own thesis. Rather, Kirby applies the range of the play of the signifier to the substance of the feminized body. This destabilises, rather

than refutes, immutable essence and origin. Substance and signification are knitted together in corporeal representation, and writing assumes the substance and solidity of nature as cause, as presence of a subject.¹⁷⁷

The presence of embodied subjects and physiology throughout all of Wells's Scientific Romances is usefully contextualized by a compatibility with a form of British literature that Kelly Hurley describes as *fin de siècle* Gothic. At the point of transition between the 19th and 20th centuries, she characterises this in particular according to the ruination of the human subject in British fiction:

In place of a human body stable and integral (at least, liable to no worse than the ravages of time and disease), the *fin de siècle* Gothic offers the spectacle of a body metamorphic and undifferentiated; in place of the possibility of human transcendence, the prospect of an existence circumscribed within the realities of gross corporeality; in place of a unitary and securely bounded human subjectivity, one that is both fragmented and permeable.¹⁷⁸

Hurley's description of the presence of bodies and degeneration in *fin de siècle* Gothic is summarised as the *abhuman*. The term is borrowed from the author William Hope Hodgson (1877-1918), whose fiction fused maritime adventure with supernatural fantasy, and refers to a subject who is not-quite-human. The condition is one of instability, in constant danger of becoming. Hurley suggests a resonance between this model and Kristeva's description of abjection in *Powers of Horror*. The status of such a subject is ambivalent, on the one hand working to maintain the illusion of an autonomous identity, while on the other welcoming the pleasures of indifferenciation brought about by the collapse of ego boundaries. Hurley describes *fin de siècle* Gothic as 'positioned within precisely such an ambivalence: convulsed by nostalgia for the 'fully human' subject whose undoing it accomplishes so resolutely, and yet aroused by the prospect of a monstrous becoming'¹⁷⁹. Within the genre, she identifies abhumanness as an exorbitant variety of spectacle as the human body collapses and is re-shaped: 'into slug-men, snake-women, ape-men, beast

people, octopus-seal-men, beetle-women, dog-men, fungus-people'¹⁸⁰. These transformations are acts of defamiliarisation and reconstitution.

Hurley draws on Terry Eagleton's argument from *Marxism and Literary Criticism* which suggests that such a new mode of form may come from a collective demand, with roots in an ideological shift. This is applicable to genres, to popular, like-minded texts, widely produced and consumed. Gothic is thought of as a genre 'reemerging cyclically, at periods of cultural stress, to negotiate the anxieties that accompany social and epistemological transformations and crises'.¹⁸¹ As Hurley points out, it is possible to identify a general anxiety concerning the nature of human identity within late Victorian and early Edwardian culture, generated by discourses that were dismantling conventional notions of the human subject. As a literary form, *fin de siècle* Gothic could be read as something of a response to these recently arisen discourses. Theories relating to evolution, anthropology, embodied criminality, degeneration, and psychology might all be read as new and threatening forms of imagining the body. Wells can therefore be read as working within a set of specific conditions in the form of a loosely defined genre in his depiction of the body as a fantastic form. This fantastic form must still maintain that sense of believable familiarity which constitutes *The Time Machine*, as well as the Scientific Romances in general. The particular configurations of bodies as contested and scripted forms occupy a primacy of place within the novel, serving as the key to reading its principle allegorical significance.

Another useful perspective is Martin Gliserman's account of the body in relation to the novel, which describes the body as integral to the text, and as something that is revealed through the language of the text.¹⁸² It is encoded and communicated through language. This presence of the body is described as a core phenomenon of language. What is communicated in a novel includes as a fundamental presence the notion of a universal and recognisably ontological anatomical body. He draws on an idea from Noam Chomsky: 'language is an organ, an organ about organs, and an organ that writes itself into its communications. And it replicates itself where and when it can.'¹⁸³ Clearly, manifestations of bodies in fiction are heterogeneous; sentences can be composed to depict the physical, or

temporal movement of a protagonist, yet those sentences themselves take on a physical form and structure. So, in addition to the diegetic presence of bodies in a novel, the structure of the printed form of language expresses a codified sense of the body. The movement and tensions within the language suggest and articulate the body through a sense of textual dynamics. On a more literal level, this suggested physicality of sentences is actually physical in that it positions the reader's body, as well as positioning readers psychically.

The complicity of a reader in this process of codification and reading appears ambiguous, and Gliserman argues that this non-diegetic structure is a suggestive physicality that is easily passed over in favour of narrative momentum. In this scheme, readers pass over or through sentences under the influence of architectural structures. This appears analogous to the actions of social space upon subjects who may not be aware of the degree to which their actions are influenced, but is perhaps more accurately defined in terms of architectonic properties. The systematic internal layout of text comes to be defined and differentiated by other sentences around it. Sentences are embedded ideograms, abstract forms read in relation to one another. As a vehicle for conveying information, language operates through carrying a multitude of messages simultaneously. One of these messages generated is described as 'from the body, about the body, to the body, for the body.'¹⁸⁴ Reading this body is less a case of studying the flow of syntactic forms but rather involves looking at the patterns woven by those syntactical forms. It is a case of picking semantic relationships out of their flow and looking at them as intricate networks.

The population encountered in the year 802,701 are described according to grotesquely exaggerated physiognomic principles. Their bodies are codified to suggest their species characteristics. The historical struggle which has been the cause of their evolution and that has led to this cannibalistic resolution is firmly rooted in Wells's present. The differentiation of their physiology is unambiguously rendered: the Morlocks as ape-like beasts in contrast to the fragility of the Eloi, their features described as a 'Dresden china type of prettiness'¹⁸⁵, beautiful but infantile. It is worth noting that in Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography*, when discussing his

open marriage and sexual adventures, he repeatedly describes his second wife in terms of Dresden china. This comparison with a particular quality of a category of object in relation to a quality of a person conveys a physical and physiognomical delicateness and fragility which embodied his (first and second) wife's difficulty in responding to Wells's sexual appetite. This quality of the Eloi, which is more than sexual and actually accounts for a whole form of society, is contrasted with The Time Traveller's impressions of the Morlocks:

I felt a peculiar shrinking from those pallid bodies. They were just the half-bleached colour of the worms and things one see preserved in spirit in a zoological museum. And they were filthily cold to the touch. Probably my shrinking was largely due to the sympathetic influence of the Eloi, whose disgust of the Morlocks I now began to appreciate.¹⁸⁶

Patrick Parrinder has commented on this relationship of 'sympathetic influence', a process of partial identification that the Time Traveller admits he felt for the Eloi. The first of their kind he meets face to face is described as 'indescribably frail. His flushed face reminded me of the more beautiful kind of consumptive – that hectic beauty of which we used to hear so much'.¹⁸⁷ Parrinder suggests that this is evidence of a kind of authorial affinity with the Eloi:

Since tuberculosis had been (wrongly) diagnosed, it is significant that the first of the Eloi whom the Time Traveller meets face to face has the 'hectic beauty' of a 'consumptive'.¹⁸⁸

Not only are they more human than the grotesque Morlocks, but the Eloi also have a quality of vulnerability that can tenuously be biographically linked to Wells's own poor health, albeit with a degree of specificity. This is a society that Wells's protagonist is ultimately able to display a great deal of identification with, wreaking violent destruction upon the predatory creatures that feed upon them. While I will subsequently suggest an alternative reading of this account of the consumptive

beauty of the Eloi as a connotation of degeneracy, I'd like to sustain the simultaneity of readings in this passage.

These radical differences between the two species, one inducing 'peculiar shrinking', the other 'sympathetic influence', are both physiological and indications of character, and the distinct responses described by the Time Traveller seem to be generated and sustained as a mutual effect, 'peculiar shrinking' made more pronounced by 'sympathetic influence'. The split that constitutes these radically contrasting species has been brought about by some form of evolutionary principle but this is not something that can be accounted for as strictly the result of a purely Darwinian process of selection and adaptation, but rather, as the Time Traveller eventually hypothesises, has been brought about by perpetuation of social conditions that exist within his own epoch. This transformation of bodies is purely physiognomical. On the one hand, these descriptions seem to mark a distinct sense of contrast between rational, classificatory discourses associated with specimens from a zoological museum, and both the Eloi and Morlocks: as races whose cultures are embodied in their physical forms, and whose cultures are incapable of supporting something as complex as museological activity. They are therefore clearly both differentiated from the form of humanity represented by the Time Traveller. This cultural alterity, embodied in difference of species, is reinforced subsequently by the discovery of the Palace of Green Porcelain, an abandoned ruin of a vast museum, that retains none of its original significance to either Eloi or Morlock. Yet it also introduces a pseudo-scientific perspective on these bodies, through a suggestion of scientific objectivity, and an associative connection between physiognomy with rational classificatory discourses. While from a rational, late nineteenth-century perspective, such an emphasis on physiognomy appears irrational and in opposition to any scientific, classificatory discourse, assumptions based on appearance are deeply rooted and persistent long beyond the point of Wells's writing of *The Time Machine*.

Physiognomy in its loosest sense has been a historically enduring set of ideas, and appears to be as old as recorded culture. It is arguably described as a fundamental and cross-culturally universal issue, in the sense that it is concerned

with relationships between the outward appearances of an embodied subject, and some culturally assigned values located within. Its perceptual assumptions find voice in Socrates and Plato, in the certainty of an uncoincidental propinquity of vice and ugliness, and physical beauty reflecting inner beauty respectively: '(Socrates) would advise youths to look in their mirrors every morning to note what progress they were making along the path of virtue.'¹⁸⁹ Aristotle's *Physiognomonica*, which until the eighteenth century was generally regarded as the standard work on physiognomy, relied upon symmetry and proportion as a register of moral disposition. While its systematic tabulation gives the appearance of believable solidity, there are more incredulous parallels drawn between human and animal nature, where the qualities of a lion depict properties of masculinity, and a panther femininity. Yet despite the persistence of a connection between outward appearance and inner self, the idea of physiognomy was most clearly articulated and popularised as a rational and scientific form in the late eighteenth century by the Swiss theologian, philosopher and physiologist Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801). His work, with its reliance on painfully detailed rules concerning the smallest details of physical appearance, was often confused with phrenology, and the two fields were viewed as extremely close, often indistinguishably so, in the nineteenth century.¹⁹⁰

Graeme Tytler has argued that the nineteenth century novel as a general form shares an unshakeable link to Lavater's physiognomical writings, in particular, his *Physiognomische Fragmente* (1775-8):

(...) European literature as a whole, and most particularly the novel, with its detailed descriptions and analyses of human beings, landscapes, house interiors, and inanimate objects, is in many ways an expression of that physiognomical atmosphere whose beginnings can be traced primarily to the *Physiognomische Fragmente*.¹⁹¹

The limits of Tytler's survey of this link between the materiality encoded within literary texts and physiognomy are defined by, and mirror, the popularity of physiognomy as a credible discourse between the 1770s and 1880s, a period he

describes as ‘essentially ‘Lavaterian’’.¹⁹² By the end of the nineteenth century, modes of rationalist and empiricist thought had largely dispelled the scientific appearance of physiological disciplines, in part, due to the discrediting of phrenology, which although distinct, appeared as a specific science of a general principle. While Tytler describes an analogous decline in literary portraiture, he also asserts its continuing presence in the twentieth century. The ur-form of the novel is one of Lavaterian origins which are reiterated through the perpetuation of fiction as the literary forms of novels and short stories. Wells is cited as one of these twentieth century novelists whose work is haunted by the spectre of physiognomy. It seems safe to assume that in particular he is mentioned due to the Scientific Romances, rather than for the majority of his fiction, which is unremarkable in all but the most general sense suggested by Tytler in its relationship to physiognomy. Wells’s exclusion from the temporal boundaries of Tytler’s study is unfortunate, as *The Time Machine*, like the other Scientific Romances, is a self-conscious and deliberate engagement with physiognomy at an allegorical level, rather than an attempt to perpetuate a literal concurrence with the correlation of appearance and character. The ‘Lavaterian’ character of the Scientific Romances should be read a device; a literary conceit rather than a literal reflection and reproduction of ideology.

The bodies of humanity’s future, the distinct species of Eloi and Morlock, can be characterised in terms of degeneration, and it is this in particular that is suggested through the deliberately ‘Lavaterian’ character of *The Time Machine*. The idea of the embodied ruination of the human subject is prevalent in British fiction at the turn of the century, and in particular is most evident within *fin de siècle* Gothic. The bodies in the Time Machine are consistent with this notion of a loose set of genre concerns and strategies, in which human subjects are defamiliarised and violently reconstituted within text. Such fictional, and alarmist, rearticulations of embodied subjectivity can be placed within a general set of anxieties around notions of degeneration, which by the end of the nineteenth century were prevalent and concrete in their manifestations. Such anxieties are well described by Max Nordau’s *Degeneration* (1893; English trans. 1895) Nordau’s ideas are descended from the those of Cesare Lombroso, whose fame comes from his investigations of criminal

anthropology: in particular his theory of the 'born criminal'.¹⁹³ For Lombroso, criminal behaviour was understandable in terms of atavism, or rather how latent characteristics from earlier points of species history might reappear. The form of the physical body revealed with readable precision the intellectual, moral and emotional nature of the subject. Criminality was therefore innate and recognisable as a set of varied physical characteristics. These were absent from a normative model of the Caucasian western subject, but present in the form of features such as an irregular cranium, an asymmetrical face, large ears or disproportionate limbs.

These anomalies to the normative body were signs of reversion to earlier stages in humanity's evolutionary development as a species, as well as finding analogous comparisons with other species. While an obvious comparison might be thought to have been drawn up with apes, Lombroso's list of physical correspondences is drawn from an extensive and absurdly inconsistent selection of possible ancestral forms, including: 'dogs, rodents, lemurs, reptiles, oxen, birds of prey, and domestic fowl, to name a few.'¹⁹⁴ These traces could be found across the whole exterior of a body, as well as inside: for example in abnormalities of brain structure. Their presence in humans did not itself cause criminal behaviour, but did reveal a savage or animal-like set of characteristics within a subject that were likely to prompt acts of criminal behaviour, which might generally be thought of as a beast-like transgression of civilized restraint and morality. Hurley's reading of Lombroso's atavism is a description of a type of embodied subjectivity which is too full of varied and incompatible histories. This is a reading of human bodies that is potentially 'utterly chaotic, unable to maintain its distinctions from a whole world of animal possibilities.'¹⁹⁵

As a student and zealous advocate of Lombroso, Nordau sought to convey, through a specificity of investigated form, a sense of urgency in his argument concerning the snowballing perpetuation of decadence as a genuine threat to civilization, the effects of which were already well established. He lays out his intentions in a letter to Lombroso:

Now I have undertaken the work of investigating (as much as possible after your method) the tendencies of the fashions in art and literature; of proving that they have their source in the degeneracy of their authors, and that the enthusiasm of their admirers is for manifestations of more or less pronounced moral insanity, imbecility, and dementia.¹⁹⁶

Nordau's views of progress were established upon the redemptive potential of the natural sciences. Humanity's future can only lie in its elevation and development, based upon a form of progress which is inseparable from rational scientific thought. For Nordau, who adopted a mainstream view, science operates according to irrefutable and unchangeable physical laws 'which apply to man as much to nature itself.'¹⁹⁷ Clarity of formulation, observation and mental discipline, characterised as 'attention', are vital in his concept of progress. Therefore the description of the Morlock, a monstrous abhuman being, in terms of a formaldehyde-preserved natural history specimen could be read in terms of its opposition to a progressive, orderly sense of zoological classification. However, the notion of degeneration is much more prevalent in the embodied forms of future human than just in the animal-like appearance of the Morlocks. It is inscribed within the embodied forms of both populations and every aspect of their praxis.

The Time Traveller's account of these populations is a linear and accumulative account, which goes from first impressions to increasingly elaborate speculations about the parallel histories of the two cultures. Almost as soon as he arrives in the year 802, 701, the Time Traveller sees a group of Eloi who have noticed his arrival, but his speculations about the future are described during his first journey in the time machine:

What strange developments of humanity, what wonderful advances upon our rudimentary civilization, I thought, might not appear when I came to look nearly in the dim elusive world that fluctuated before my eyes! I saw a great splendid architecture rising about me, more massive than any buildings of our own time, and yet, as it seemed, built of glimmer and mist. I saw a richer

green flow up the hill-side, and remain there without any wintry intermission. Even through the veil of my confusion the earth seemed very fair.¹⁹⁸

The visual evidence seen from the machine suggest a certain sense of optimism, of architectural wonders and a gradual improving of climate. In comparison, the Time Traveller's own era is derided as only a 'rudimentary civilization'. Yet it is from these debased seeds that transformations taking place have grown.

When the Time Traveller finally brings the machine to an abrupt halt, there is a sudden transformation from fair weather and optimistic vistas. As the machine reels over, flinging its passenger through the air, the Time Traveller finds himself in a thunderstorm, being lashed by hailstones. The idealised distance of his panoramic view shattered, he is physically soaked, and his senses momentarily assaulted by the weather. This slows down his first impressions of the surroundings, but provides a dramatic introduction to a key object in the future landscape:

I stood up and looked round me. A colossal figure, carved apparently in some white stone, loomed indistinctly beyond the rhododendrons through the hazy downpour. But all else of the world was invisible.... As the columns of hail grew thinner, I saw the white figure more distinctly. It was very large, for a silver birch tree touched its shoulder. It was of white marble, in shape something like a winged Sphinx, but the wings, instead of being carried vertically at the sides, were spread so that it seemed to hover. The pedestal, it appeared to me was of bronze, and was thick with verdigris. It chanced that the face was towards me; the sightless eyes seemed to watch me; there was the faint shadow of a smile on the lips. It was greatly weather-worn, and that imparted an unpleasant suggestion of disease. I stood looking at it for a little space – half a minute, perhaps, or half an hour. It seemed to advance and to recede as the hail drove before it denser or thinner.¹⁹⁹

The Sphinx is gradually revealed to the Time Traveller over an indeterminate duration, his sense of time passing seemingly as distorted as it had been during his journey into the future. This fragmentary perception is shattered by another sudden transformation due to meteorological phenomena. As the storm clears, the Time Traveller is overwhelmed by the growing clarity of the Sphinx:

I looked up at the crouching white shape, and the full temerity of my voyage came upon me. What might appear when that hazy curtain was altogether withdrawn?²⁰⁰

The emphatic presence of the Sphinx can also be read in Wells's insistence that its image be used on the cover of the Heinemann edition. It has also been described in terms of a figurative embodiment of the conjunction of the Eloi's world on the surface and the subterranean world of the Morlocks,²⁰¹ and it is to these differences I wish to return.

The differences between the two sub-species have been brought about by some form of evolutionary principle but they are not the result of Darwinian selection and adaptation, but rather, as the Time Traveller eventually hypothesises, have been brought about by the perpetuation of social conditions that exist within his own epoch. This discourse is solidified by the image of the Sphinx that dominates the immediate landscape around the Time Traveller's point of arrival, and inside which his machine is later hidden by Morlocks. For this reading of the Sphinx, I am indebted to Leon Stover's detailed critical reading of *The Time Machine*.²⁰² The statue alludes to an essay by Thomas Carlyle from his collection *Past and Present* (1843), which together with his *Sartor Resartus* (1838) – referred to by the Time Traveller – was ubiquitously familiar to Wells's late nineteenth-century audience. The degree of Carlyle's status as indispensable, ubiquitous and well known is demonstrated in Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) as Watson, the narrator, describes his bewilderment at his new acquaintance, Sherlock Holmes. While his knowledge of some fields was astoundingly extensive, there seemed to be some radical gaps in Holmes's field of learning:

His ignorance was as remarkable as his knowledge. Of contemporary literature, philosophy and politics he appeared to know next to nothing. Upon my quoting Thomas Carlyle, he inquired in the naïvest way who he might be and what he had done.²⁰³

The radical inconsistencies in Holmes's knowledge mean that he also has no knowledge of the structure or planets of the Solar System, which is also described as a comparison to put the strangeness of his ignorance of Carlyle into perspective.²⁰⁴

Carlyle's essay draws upon the allegory of the Sphinx. This concerns the myth that certain death was promised to anyone that could not answer her riddle. The essay prophesied a similar fate if his own question relating to the organisation of labour and management of the working classes were to remain unanswered. For Carlyle, decadent generations of factory owners had allowed labour to organize itself with 'ape's freedom' in pursuit of sectarian class interests at the expense of social duty; with the 'liberty of apes,' Labour seeks its own greed no less than its nominal masters given only to profiteering.²⁰⁵ Carlyle's solution to this unsustainable system was the militarising of Labour. In Wells's future, this problem has been allowed to escalate, giving his fear of an organised working class bestial and predatory materiality. Stover makes the point that in recognising his own social context, 'the Time Traveller realizes that he has never left home; that the future is but a mockery of his own time.'²⁰⁶ Through their characterisation as ape-like beasts, the working classes have taken on this outward appearance.

An equivalent physiognomy applies to the Eloi. Their name is the plural version of Elohim, who in the Old Testament are lesser Canaanite gods. Stover makes clear that the term has a more general biblical usage referring to personages of royal dignity, such as kings and the pharaoh, but points to a particularly ironic usage. This single instance, in the 82nd Psalm, alludes to potentates, who although mortal, style themselves as gods: 'You are Eloi, sons of the most High, all of you; nevertheless, You shall die like men, and fall like any prince.'²⁰⁷ It is this ironic usage that is employed in Wells's classification of this species of future humanity.

They are failed gods, heirs to a generations of ruling classes whose actions have led to degeneration and destructive failure. This ruling class are the subjects at which Carlyle aims his discourse. They are based upon Carlyle's notion of Dandies, a leisure class who allow the perpetuation of a volatile class situation:

In *Sartor Resartus* he speaks of the Dandies as a leisure class living for show on the surface of life. The Drudges dig and work in the earth, living there in dark dwellings where they seldom see the sky. 'To the eye of the political Seer, their mutual relation, pregnant with the elements of discord and hostility, is far from consoling.'²⁰⁸

The lack of any apparently Darwinian explanation for the physical differences between the Eloi and Morlocks seems explicit and deliberate, and seems to bear little correlation to any idea of adaptation that would appear obviously beneficial to reproduction and survival; why would ape-like features be better suited to an underground, industrial society? This is purely physiognomical, an embodiment of social discourse.²⁰⁹

The populations of the Eloi and Morlocks are certainly compatible with mainstream notions of degeneration, but in terms of their behaviour, the Eloi are closest to the kind of decadence that Nordau warns against. This decadence is codified in their beautiful but frail physical appearance, but is also actively performed. The Time Traveller's first close look at an Eloi comes soon after he arrives, and a group of Eloi who had observed his materialisation from a distance come over to investigate his presence:

He was a slight creature – perhaps four feet high – clad in a purple tunic.... He struck me as being a very beautiful and graceful creature, but indescribably frail. His flushed face reminded me of the more beautiful kind of consumptive – that hectic beauty of which we used to hear so much. At the sight of him I suddenly regained confidence.²¹⁰

The description of the Eloi as ‘the more beautiful form of consumptive’ appears to be a specific reference to that fin-de-siècle decadence which Nordau sought so vigilantly to oppose. With a particular emphasis on Aubrey Beardsley and Oscar Wilde, McConnell suggests that with their ‘unorthodox eroticism and their defense of ‘pure’ (i.e. non-functional, non-mechanical) art, the decadents are an important source for Wells’s conception of the Eloi’.²¹¹ In making this association, the Time Traveller transposes his prejudice onto the appearance of this new race, although only does so completely when their actions seem to confirm his assumptions. A group of eight or ten Eloi quickly assemble around the Time Traveller, but even so he still describes a certain lack of interest in their behaviour towards him, which is conveyed in amongst the physical descriptions of the Eloi: ‘The eyes were large and mild; and – this may seem egotism on my part – I fancied even then that there was a certain lack of the interest I might have expected in them.’²¹²

As well as this lack of visible interest, partly conveyed by the eyes of the Eloi, there is no apparent attempt on the part of the Eloi to establish communication with the Time Traveller. He therefore attempts to suggest something of his means of arrival to them, by pointing to the machine, then to himself, and then as a means to suggest time, to the sun. One of the Eloi follows his gesture, and imitates the sound of thunder. This gesture makes the Time Traveller ask himself if the people of the future are fools:

You see I had always anticipated that the people of the year Eight Hundred and Two Thousand odd would be incredibly in front of us in knowledge, art, everything. Then one of them suddenly asked me a question that showed him to be on the intellectual level of one of our five-year-old children – asked me, in fact, if I had come from the sun in a thunderstorm! It let loose the judgement I had suspended upon their clothes, their frail light limbs, and fragile features.²¹³

Such a judgement seems to encompass the distaste associated with fin-de-siècle decadence as well as the childlike outward appearance of the Eloi. In itself, the

judgement seems rash, as it is no clear indication of the Eloi's intellectual capacity. It is just as absurd to imagine that the Time Traveller arrived from the past as it is to think that he came from the heavens in a storm.

Although it is consistent with subsequent speculative encounters and experiences, the conclusion is more a confirmation of the Time Traveller's reliance on appearances and his late-Victorian-morality than it is any kind of objectively reasoned account. But nevertheless, this is exactly how appearance and intellect are conflated in material forms within the text of the novel. This material constitution is contradictory, and never particularly stable. In this way, it is reflective of the suggested condition of the protagonist/inner narrator. For almost as soon as the Time Traveller condemns the Eloi, feeling disappointment in the idea that he had built his machine in vain, he is enjoying their beauty:

Then one came laughing towards me, carrying a chain of beautiful flowers altogether new to me, and put it around my neck. The idea was received with melodious applause; and presently they were all running to and fro for flowers, and laughingly flinging them upon me until I was almost smothered with blossom. You who have never seen the like can scarcely imagine what delicate and wonderful flowers countless years of culture had created.²¹⁴

It seems here as if the Time Traveller is as much describing the Eloi as he is the flowers being placed on him.

The very presence of degeneration within a work of popular fiction might risk characterising *The Time Machine* in terms of Nordau's very objections, but here degeneration is made the overt subject matter, and dealt with in a clearly codified and ultimately explanatory manner. The Time Traveller's sequential commentaries that punctuate his stay in the future function to provide a set of shifting accounts of the world he finds himself in, and that through a process of rethinking his conclusions through subsequent experience his account is one of degeneration, although it retains its speculative status. However, while the account of degeneration as it can be seen in humanity's descendants is made clear and forms Wells's thesis in

the novel, the status of the Time Traveller is less clear cut. In the subsequent sections, I would like to suggest that the novel's protagonist is precisely one of those figures in both the production of literature, and as characters in fiction, that Nordau identified as so threatening. Nordau's reading of *fin de siècle* decadence is one in which stability of masculinity is undermined. For Nordau, masculinity must retain its assumed status as a stable and coherent normative form. In corrupt forms of decadent representation, morality is rendered insecure and unregulated, and aberrant types present a very real and contagious threat to both the appearance and maintenance of a secure and normative status quo. The Time Traveller's experience of the future, as I will attempt to argue, is one that from Nordau's perspective represents a fundamentally destabilising and threatening encounter.

The Eloi are characterised by a relative androgyny. There are males and females, but they are not as clearly differentiated as late-nineteenth-century modernity would demand.

Then, in a flash, I perceived that all had the same form of costume, the same soft hairless visage, and the same girlish rotundity of limb. It may seem strange, perhaps, that I had not noticed this before. But everything was so strange. Now, I saw the fact plainly enough. In costume, and in all the differences of texture and bearing that now mark off the sexes from each other, these people of the future were alike. And the children seemed to my eyes to be but the miniatures of their parents.²¹⁵

While the sexes are not identical, they are described in terms of a 'close resemblance', which is accounted for by the Time Traveller by a cumulative and degenerative absence of gender roles brought about by affluence, complacency and decadence:

Strength is the outcome of need; security sets a premium on feebleness. The work of ameliorating the conditions of life – the true civilizing process that makes life more and more secure – had gone steadily on to a climax.²¹⁶

According to the Time Traveller's speculations, social change has found its forms within the Eloi bodies. Strength, as muscular and masculine, is based upon need, and is devolved by the unchecked and excessive processes of civilization. For at this stage, the Time Traveller still believes that this society is one of untroubled luxury, the pinnacle of civilized progress, which appears Eden-like through a range of stratified manifestations:

The air was free from gnats, the earth from weeds or fungi; everywhere were fruits and sweet and delightful flowers; brilliant butterflies flew hither and thither. The ideal of preventative medicine was attained. Diseases had been stamped out. (...) And I shall have to tell you later that even the processes of putrefaction and decay had been profoundly affected by these changes.²¹⁷

The struggles of nature that impose themselves on a social body have also been eradicated from the general landscape of the future, which is depicted here as an extension of the body, as an environment that is classified in terms of its alterity and hygienically sterile perfection. There is a conflation of two factors of change and variation upon the future human bodies here, environment and habit. While the factors of environment have little to do with elements of Eloi and Morlock physiology that would be reproductive benefit as in the general Darwinian model, there is a concession to the possible influence of habit as an influential force for change from Darwin's perspective:

Habit also has a deciding influence, (...) for instance, I find in the domestic duck that the bones of the wing weigh less and the bones of the leg more, in proportion to the whole skeleton, than do the same bones in the wild-duck; and I presume that this change may be safely attributed to the domestic duck

flying much less, and walking more, than its wild parent. The great and inherited development of the udders in cows and goats in countries where they are habitually milked, in comparison with the state of these organs on other countries, is another instance of the effect of its use. Not a single domestic animal can be named which has not in some country drooping ears; and the view suggested by some authors, that the drooping is due to the disuse of the muscles of the ear, from the animals not being much alarmed by danger, seems probable.²¹⁸

By analogy, the decadent comfort of the Eloi landscapes has mimicked the process of domestication in animals. The need for masculine strength has been eradicated, as have qualities of overtly defined distinction between sexes, which no longer appear necessary.

A regulatory, normative, ideal of sex may be in place but it is not exactly that which the Time Traveller is accustomed to. The reiterated norms of sexual difference have been abandoned with the rest of human knowledge and culture. Without the highly regulated practices through which nineteenth-century sex is materialised, sexual difference itself has shifted. This is not a differentiated culture imposed upon the body. The materiality of these bodies is inseparable from the materialization of the absence of the regulatory norm. The Eloi have not gone through the subjective forming processes associated with the assuming of a sex, providing an additional degree of alienation from the Time Traveller. However, despite this, the Time Traveller is still able to develop a type of heterosexual attachment to Weena, one of the Eloi, through the imposition of his own regulatory sexual ideals upon her embodied self.

The Time Traveller's relationship with Weena does not begin immediately after his arrival, but after the time machine has disappeared. He subsequently resolves to put the problem of the missing device 'as much as possible to the corner of my memory.'²¹⁹ He therefore uses his time in the exploration of the future landscape and to speculate upon the conditions he finds, and the circumstances of his meeting with Weena serve to enforce his speculative conclusions:

That day, too, I made a friend – of a sort. It happened that, as I was watching some of the little people bathing in a shallow, one of them was seized with cramp and began drifting down stream. The main current ran rather swiftly, but not too strongly for even a moderate swimmer. It will give you an idea, therefore, of the strange deficiency in these creatures, when I tell you that none made the slightest attempt to rescue the weakly-crying little thing which was drowning before their eyes.²²⁰

The presence of ‘strange deficiency’ is interesting, as it indicates a lack not specifically of muscular strength, but also an embodied absence of moral strength. Weakness of body is conflated with a weakness of resolve, character, responsibility. This Eloi’s drowning could have been prevented even by one of the physically frail ‘little people’. However, upon realising that this is not going to happen, the Time Traveller performs his own rescue: ‘... I hurriedly slipped off my clothes, and, wading in at a point lower down, I caught the poor mite and drew her safe to land.’²²¹ There are some determining conditions to this relationship that might be seen to set it up as a heterosexual one. The first is that they have met through the conditions of a literary rescue, although in actual fact, the act of wading into the river to pick up this Eloi from the water was a relatively understated act for a piece of adventure fiction. This action is downplayed in order to emphasise the degenerative apathy of the Eloi, but also seems to suggest an unstable start to this relationship.

Once back on land, the Time Traveller revives the near-drowned Eloi with ‘a little rubbing of the limbs’.²²² This act of contact between bodies is suggestive of a transfer of energy, of the Time Traveller’s comparative vigour, both physically and morally, being passed onto Weena. That some form of his own characteristics might have been passed on is sustained in her response, as well as developed in the pseudo-heterosexual relationship that emerges: ‘I had got to such a low estimate of her kind that I did not expect any gratitude from her. In that, however, I was wrong.’²²³ Through the rescue, it could be suggested that Weena is transformed. Perhaps this

necessitates viewing the act of rescue as a masculine form, which activates an inherent but deeply suppressed femininity within Weena. That her response is surprising may suggest a somewhat ironic depiction of how a woman might respond to a man within a dramatic literary situation; that no matter how androgynous, this is somehow an essential feminine characteristic.

When he next meets Weena after leaving her to recover from her near-drowning, his error in assuming the Eloi's ingratitude is demonstrated:

This happened in the morning. In the afternoon I met my little woman, as I believe it was, as I was returning towards my centre from an exploration: and she received me with cries of delight and presented me with a big garland of flowers – evidently made for me and me alone.²²⁴

This is a relationship that is characterised, like every aspect of these future bodies, by the notion of abhuman indeterminacy. In relating his account of events to the guests in his house, the Time Traveller shows some self-conscious uncertainty in the description of this relationship. The tone of this is rendered by his apparent refusal to commit to the description of Weena as a woman. Nevertheless, the Time Traveller admits to being taken with this gesture, and ascribes the possibility of his feeling desolate to account for his enthusiasm for her action. Language proves to be an obstacle in their relationship, as it does in all the Time Traveller's contact with the Eloi. Although having grasped some sense of meaning from their speech, understanding is limited: 'At any rate I did my best to display my appreciation of the gift. We were soon seated together in a little stone arbour, engaged in conversation, chiefly of smiles.'²²⁵ Yet the romantic implications of this scenario are downplayed. On the one hand we are told the following: 'We passed each other flowers, and she kissed my hands. I did the same to hers.'²²⁶ Yet her status as a woman is again deferred in favour of any other comparison: 'The creature's friendliness affected me exactly as a child's might have done.'²²⁷ Weena, whose name the Time Traveller is able to ascertain through a limited attempt at speech, is described here both as a 'creature' and as if she was a child. As their relationship develops, he reiterates this

likeness: 'She was exactly like a child. She wanted to be with me always.'²²⁸ The Time Traveller also states that although not knowing what her name meant, it seemed somehow appropriate.

However, while the Time Traveller maintains Weena's distance from the normative model of femininity, the tension between familiarity and alterity is uncomfortably sustained by a novel scene of domesticity, constructing a new form of relatively intimate emotional and physical relationship:

I had not, I said to myself, come into the future to carry on a miniature flirtation. Yet her distress when I left her was very great, her expostulations at the parting were sometimes frantic, and I think, altogether, I had as much trouble as comfort from her devotion. Nevertheless she was, somehow, a very great comfort. I thought it was mere childish affection that made her cling to me. Until it was too late, I did not clearly know what I had inflicted upon her when I left her. Nor until it was too late did I clearly understand what she was to me. For, by merely seeming fond of me, and showing in her weak, futile way that she cared for me, the little doll of a creature presently gave my return to the neighbourhood of the White Sphinx almost the feeling of coming home; and I would watch for her tiny figure of white and gold so soon as I came over the hill.²²⁹

While in part appearing as a satirical account of romance, this emergent situation is constructed from a union of past expectations and new possibilities.

The problematically depicted differentiation of sex, as well as a more general sense of the late nineteenth-century ideological importance of a self-conscious manipulation of the body in the form of responsible improvement, is stressed by the Time Traveller's description of degenerate neglect. It is also consistent with other forms of discourse concerning the body as a site of articulation and potential anxiety, for example as described by Tamar Garb in her account of representations of sexed physiology in late nineteenth century art and visual culture:

Modernity produced its own image of the body. According to the dictates of science and philosophy, modern men and women were expected to look dramatically different from one another.²³⁰

The modern body was always a gendered one. The maintenance of this distinction between male and female is not something that was taken for granted. Rather it was actively constructed and sustained as an ongoing process. In order to fulfil their social roles and obligations, men and women had to appear in the expected forms. To fail to do so flaunted a distinction that was 'natural', and which helped to sustain a necessary sense of social order:

To the nineteenth-century mind, a 'masculine woman' or 'feminine man' represented an unnatural aberration, a grotesque distortion of a preordained set of distinctions that were rooted in biology, decreed by nature and endorsed by the complex organization of sexual and social behaviour which characterized modern society.²³¹

This is an order sustained by appearances, held up by distinctions that were visible and immediately recognisable as universal differences. The breakdown of this visual order is suggestive of a similar collapse of social order.

According to Garb, the burden of visual order belonged to the body. As a form to express inner identities that related to external sets of social rules and conventions, representations of bodies shared that burden:

Naked or clothed, the body in representation is cloaked in convention, conforming to society's expectations in setting, pose, attributes and physical characteristics.²³²

Garb is referring to images of human bodies in painting and photography, but the exclusive privileging of visual forms of representation in the maintenance of a 'visual order' might be an over-literal reading, and is not necessarily implied by

Garb's argument. The status of the body within such an identified field of representation, I would suggest, is too pervasive and slippery to be contained within the field of French art and visual culture. Instead, where Garb identifies apparently anomalous phenomena, analogies may be drawn with the bodies of *The Time Machine*, and with the more general sense of the abhuman in nineteenth-century popular fiction.

The tension that Garb constructs is between regimented control of the body as it appeared in art and visual culture, and the apparent failure of the body to necessarily conform as required. This is the human body as rebellious and disobedient. In straining against conventions, it fails to act as a guarantor of sexual difference. The resulting suggestions of identity are therefore not secure. They are ambiguous, like Hurley's reading of the abhuman. This tendency of failure is characterised as a set of exaggerations, mistakes and slippages:

Flesh spills out of its carefully framed contours, muscles swell too ostentatiously from finely modelled limbs, tightly laced bodies exceed their demarcated boundaries and perspiration blemishes the polished veneer of external appearances.²³³

This is in stark opposition to the body as the necessary site of displaying sexual difference, shaped, manipulated and decorated as the task requires, fixed and inflexible in its relation to the distinct categories of male and female:

For nineteenth-century witnesses, muscles that were rounded and swollen, and skin that was rough, textured and covered with hair (trimmed, waxed and shaved in the right places) reinforced notions of masculinity, while minute waistlines, bejewelled bodices, unblemished complexions and elaborate coiffures affirmed ideas about the feminine.²³⁴

Garb's point here rests on an emphasis of precariousness; that there is a fragile balance between a stable order in which sexual difference can be adequately

expressed and maintained, and representations that are either deficient or excessive. Identified within the practices of painting and photography are forms of subversion, which undermine as well as enforce a structure of distinction.²³⁵

Yet while Garb's account of the instability of bodies manifested through contradictory representations is consistent with a reading of Eloi and Morlock corporeality, the bodies of *The Time Machine* seem less like subversive aberrations, expressing anomalous forms of deficiency or excess. Rather they highlight the precariousness of the normative distinctions themselves. These are, after all, our own bodies' futures. The dissolution of sexual difference is both accumulatively symptomatic and causal. There is no primacy of difference here, no ontologically definable masculinity or femininity. Yet the absence of distinction is no less catastrophic and grotesque. While in order to sustain the fiction of this as natural, such distinctions needed to appear effortless, the distinction required considerable deliberate and often painful effort. In the hypothesising of the Time Traveller, this effort has disintegrated, along with the recognisable aspects of social order that it would have once maintained. The chaos which the transgressing of boundaries threatened has come to life, and has remodelled human society in its own grotesque and sexually undifferentiated image.

Ultimately, While Eloi sexual difference is relatively ambiguous in its manifest distinctions, what characterises Weena is less a sense of her as a masculine woman, but rather the sense in which she is female, but not human. This leads to a more general sense of embodied subjectivity in which sexual distinction is but a manifestation of a more general set of instabilities:

I saw an inscription in some unknown character. I thought, rather foolishly, that Weena might help me to interpret this, but I only learnt that the bare idea of writing had never entered her head. She always seemed to me, I fancy, more human than she was, perhaps because her affection was so human.²³⁶

Her non-human status is emphasised firmly by the Time Traveller, in acknowledgement of his own difficulty to remember the fact. Strangely, he is in part

defining Weena as not human from her inability to conceptualise writing, rather than ascribing this as a straightforward case of perfectly-human illiteracy.

In order to think through the Eloi and the Morlocks as bodies of alterity, cross cultural perspectives may be useful. Such cross cultural perspectives can, at their most articulate, not just provide straight comparisons, but raise fundamental questions about such seemingly immutable categories as sex, and conceivably, even humanity. Marilyn Strathern suggests that Western society, with its appearances of neutral categories that seem to actually be nature, fails to serve as an analogous model for the study of other societies. As Christopher Tilley points out in relation to the analysis of Melanesian bodies, Strathern argues that bodies become 'male' and 'female' not through their observable characteristics of sexual determination as demonstrated by biology, 'but by virtue of nature of their positioning in social acts'.²³⁷ Strathern argues that, as a universally applicable tendency, when either an individual or group encounter another individual or group, each part is irreducibly differentiated from the other. Unity is sustained with respect to the other. The result of this is that social structures, like individuals, are forever split:

Social life consists in a constant movement from one state to another, from one type of sociality to another, from a unity (manifested collectively or singly) to that unity split or paired with respect to another. This alternation is replicated throughout numerous cultural forms, from the manner in which crops are regarded as growing in the soil to a dichotomy between political and domestic domains.²³⁸

According to Strathern, this alternation is most notably conceptualised through Melanesian gender.

Whether a subject is male or female is not something determined, but something that comes about through these states of alternation. Being female or male is a process of being, one that emerges as a more or less unitary state. Men and women have both male and female constituents. Individuals are not just composed of multiple identities, but of male and female elements that are configured and

activated through social encounters and contexts. This Melanesian construction of sexual difference has little to do with an established mode of thinking of male and female purely as pre-existing bodily conditions. Male and female are socially constitutive principles, not attributes of bodies. While Western notions of sexual difference and the constitution of embodied subjectivity may serve as poor models for reading Melanesian bodies, these readings suggest the contingent status of Western categories. In addition to the radicalising of bodies as the sites of sexual difference, the implication is the erosion of boundaries of physical distinctness for sexual and subjective constitution, as the socially defined coming to being and alternation of sexual difference no longer exclusively implicates the body as the site of social subjectivity, but implicates not only the endowment on bodies of gender, but as Tilley suggests, on 'artefacts, events, architecture and spaces'.²³⁹

There is a consistency between these positions of anthropological relativity and the loosely defined field of poststructuralist thought. This is no accidental coincidence of morphology. Rather the histories of anthropology and poststructuralist thought are shared, laced with overlapping strands and influences: Bataille's notion of an irrational economy is drawn from anthropological sources, particularly from a freely but resonantly interpreted reading of Mauss' *The Gift*. Derrida reads and critiques Levi-Strauss as a source of the theorising of the distinctions between Logos and Telos in *Of Grammatology*, while Tilley draws upon Derrida in the formulating of his argument in *Material Culture and Text*. This consistent overlap of shared histories and concerns is demonstrated by the general assumption concerning bodies as they appear in the context of a poststructuralist account. The following is taken from an analysis of the presence of gendered subjectivity in the work of Irigaray and Deleuze:

In keeping with the poststructuralist tradition in French philosophy from which this work is largely drawn, I assume that human selves are neither substances with determinate properties nor egoic structures that accrue personal histories in a predictably orderly way. Instead, I assume that the selves we experience as our own are the product of a historically conditioned

process involving both corporeal and psychic aspects of existence, that this process needs to be instituted and continually reiterated in a social context in order to give birth to and maintain the subject at the corporeal level of embodiment as well as the psychic level of self, and that language and social positioning within a larger social field play a crucial role in this process.²⁴⁰

This passage articulates the status of bodies as they are extrapolated from *The Time Machine*, and suggests the propinquity of implication that are made available from both within the discipline of anthropology and elsewhere.

In her work on body imagery in Fiji, Anne Becker's principle assumption to which she applies her ethnographic fieldwork is that core cultural values are encoded in aesthetic ideals relating to body shape. This is a universal process, but one that takes different forms in specific contexts. She suggests that the western cultivation of the body can be seen in terms of the possibility of personal representation. The body is a medium, a resource for expression with which to communicate, particularly with reference to ideas of personal status and accomplishment. It is imagined as being under the jurisdiction of the self:

Core cultural values are clearly encoded in aesthetic ideals for body shape. Especially in the West, these ideals are constructed, homogenized, and reified in the media. In Fijian society, too, there appears to be a consensual ideal with respect to the aesthetics of bodily form, with admiration of a particular shape corresponding to positive sentiments about what the shape encodes or suggests.²⁴¹

Yet this comparison makes a distinction clear; the Fijian view sees the cultivation of a subject's body as a socially illegitimate means of distinguishing oneself. While a central discourse in village life, the distinction is one of personal motivation against the notion of body shape as a medium of community participation and idiom of care and nurture within a social network.

Becker's reading of Fijian body images addresses weight and appetite, and outlines a tendency for women to perceive their body image as acceptable, in contrast to attitudes in North America, where the same research had outlined a desire to modify the body through weight loss. While there was a cross cultural consistency in 'mid- range' of body shapes, thinner shapes suggested a low quality of care, whereas physical attractiveness bore a general correlation to a sense of robustness and good health. Another distinction to generally Western cultural values and body ideals is that of narratives of alienation, ways in which self and body may be discussed in everyday use as two polarised opposites. Becker's argument privileges a mind-body dualism as a dominant attitude in the West, and that becomes particularly visible in relation to obesity and to disorders of body image such as anorexia. Rather than the adversarial tendencies by which body and self are viewed in the West, idealised features in Fiji such as large calves or a well formed body are associated with the ability to work hard and are signs that somebody has been well cared for.

The notion of investment in body image, while universal, is manifested in distinct contextual forms. A human body can be described as registering the personal and social history that has, at least in part, forged its malleable corporeal form. Yet, as Lévi-Strauss describes, this act of shaping is one of the body's conformity to its social membership:

(...) all cultures leave their mark on the human body: through styles of costume, hair, and ornament, through physical mutilation, and through gestures, they mimic differences comparable to those that can exist between races, and by favoring certain physical types, they stabilize and perhaps even spread them.²⁴²

Becker's reading of Fijian bodies relies heavily upon this observation, in addition to drawing on Durkheim's description of social positioning, either within the interior or at the margins of a social group, either through the endorsement or disregard of consensual standards of body presentation. For Durkheim, this is a case of an obligatory duty for a subject to resemble their companions, to realise within

themselves the traits of the collective type. For Becker, the marginal aspects of this argument are as prominent and ubiquitous as conformity with a centre:

Identification with a particular subcultural ethos is achieved through visibly cultivating the body - through dress, exercise, diet, or hairstyle, for example - in ways commensurate with the moral priorities of the community.²⁴³

Although her insistence on margin and centre, on mainstream and subculture distinctions, seems clumsy when considering large and complex societies, in particular her reference to a quotidian and familiar contemporary 'West', Becker's comparative insistence maintains its sense of sound utility. The abstract notion of an anatomically defined body bound to notions of conformity is made familiar and ubiquitous. Whether relating to notions such as beauty, discipline or fertility, core values may be represented as ideal types. The Eloi and Morlocks are recognisable in their distance from any such historically appropriate models. Their bodies are also distant from the idea of the Western cultivation of the body, linked to the manipulation and forging of identity through a body that is embedded within a structural set of social relations.

One of the more resonant aspects in Becker's scheme of thinking about the body is Pierre Bourdieu's notion of taste as something that is expressed primarily through the body:

Taste, a class culture turned into nature, that is, *embodied*, helps to shape the class body. It is an incorporated principle of classification which governs all forms of incorporation, choosing and modifying everything that the body ingests and digests and assimilates, physiologically. It follows that the body is the most indisputable materialisation of class taste, which it manifests in several ways. It does this first in the seemingly most natural features of the body, the dimensions (volume, height, weight) and shapes (round or square, stiff or supple, straight or curved) of its visible forms, which express in countless ways a whole relation to the body, i.e., a way of treating it, caring

for it, feeding it, maintaining it, which reveals the deepest dispositions of the habitus.²⁴⁴

Therefore the radically opposed corporeal manifestations that are the bodies of the Eloi and the Morlocks may be read as the indisputable materialisation of class taste. Upon further examination of Bourdieu, habitus appears as an idea that resonates through *The Time Machine* and suggests an alternative form of reproduction to the Darwinian model:

The habitus is the product of the work of inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those products of collective history, the objective structures (e.g. of language, economy etc.) to succeed in reproducing themselves more or less completely, in the form of durable dispositions, in the organisms (which one can, if one wishes, call individuals) lastingly subjected to the same conditionings, and hence placed in the same material conditions of existence.²⁴⁵

Biological individuals, or embodied subjects, are grouped together as the product of shared objective conditions, and are the supports of the same habitus. The Eloi and Morlocks make up a sociologically defined model of two such groups. They are two distinct social classes, defined by objective determinations which are radically embodied. The notion of reproducible and durable dispositions is recognisably prefigured in *The Time Machine*, but articulated in an extreme and literal manner.

An alternative but arguably consistent perspective on the embodied subjectivity made present in *The Time Machine* is suggested by Judith Butler's account in *Bodies That Matter*. Butler describes gender performativity as 'the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names'.²⁴⁶ She argues that sexual difference is subject to a set of regulatory norms, working performatively to constitute the very materiality of subjects who are compatible with heterosexual ideals. The materiality of the body is rethought 'as the

effect of power, as power's most productive effect'.²⁴⁷ For Butler, the matter of bodies is indissociable from the regulatory norms that govern their materialization. Her sense of performativity is not an act of agency, but the regulation of hegemonic discourse. Sex is a cultural norm, not a body onto which gender is imposed. The matrix of gender relations is prior to the emergence of the 'human'. In relation to *The Time Machine*, the interest here is not just sexual difference but the constitution of the subject's body in general: the matter of how bodies are constituted. The notion of performativity that she suggests is not necessarily that which is manifested within *The Time Machine*. This section will follow a loose diegetic arc, from the Time Traveller's exploration of the Palace of Green Porcelain, to his escape from the year 802,701. As the Time Traveller is detached from any sense of contextual social framework that might constitute a hegemonic discourse, perhaps new forms of agency are determined.

Yet the status of these bodies, as human or not, is consistently unresolved and ambiguous. This indeterminacy, in part, seems to be articulated by Butler's sense of bodies as being subject to materialization through discursive performativity. The sense of the way in which regulatory structures, morality and law for example, define the status of bodies is demonstrated by the Time Traveller's fashioning of a weapon from a metal lever, and his expressed desire to use it to kill Morlocks:

(...) I rejoined her with a mace in my hand more than sufficient, I judged, for any Morlock skull I might encounter. And I longed very much to kill a Morlock or so. Very inhuman, you may think, to want to go killing one's own descendants! But it was impossible, somehow, to feel any humanity in the things. Only my disinclination to leave Weena, and a persuasion that if I began to slake my thirst for murder my Time Machine might suffer, restrained me from going straight down the gallery and killing the brutes I heard.²⁴⁸

Implied here is the status of Morlock bodies as outside of a regulatory framework that would ensure a stable sense of morality, regarding not only their own behaviour,

but the actions that may be inflicted upon them. Their inability to be constituted as fully human justifies murderous intent towards them. However, this sense of an unsuccessful constitution of embodied subjectivity is not just applicable to the unquestionably abhuman Morlocks, but seems to have infected the Time Traveller himself. His own status as a clearly determined and embodied subject seems to have been thrown into a state of flux and instability, to the point at which he is eager to commit acts of savage violence against the Morlocks.

To openly admit to this desire suggests an equal admission of his own crises of humanity. The Time Traveller attempts to depict this as normative behaviour in light of a complete absence of a normative framework with which to construct and judge any behaviour. It is as if being thrown into a situation that reveals a more primal sense of humanity, or humanness, in which his own higher judgement must determine his desires in the absence of any process of consistent behavioural reinscription, an abyss appears revealing the lack of any essentialised humanity. It is only in retelling the events in the form of narration that the reiterative elements that constitute embodied behaviour resurface. This leads the Time Traveller to self-consciously account for his murderous desires: 'Very inhuman, you may think, to want to go killing one's own descendants!' Without the stable social contexts that might make such a judgement, the Time Traveller himself shows signs of abhuman behaviour. Just as his own sexual orientation is thrown into instability through his attraction to the indeterminately female and not quite human Weena, his very sense of himself as a morally constituted human being is questioned in his attitude to the Morlocks. In failing 'to feel any humanity in the things', he is also starting to fail to feel any humanity in himself.

The suggestion here is one of the interruption of embodied subjectivity as an ongoing and reiterative process. The interruption is temporary, and diegetically recounted when returned to that contextual framework of similarly constituted subjects. The future world is one that disrupts the Foucaultian regulatory ideals that Butler argues constitute sexual difference and the stability of an embodied subject. Within such regulatory practices is, according to Butler, a kind of productive form of power that is able to produce the bodies it controls. In a sense, the perspective of the

Time Traveller might also constitute such a power, one that is attempting to both make sense of, and simultaneously constitute, the bodies he encounters. This process of constitution is not physical, but involves the interpretation of their corporeality within a system of moral and socially explicable matrices. This correlates initially to appearance, but also to behaviour, and perhaps ultimately, when coming to the conclusion of murderous desire and the right to life, seems determined by propinquity or distance to his own notion of humanness. This judgement is clearly idealised and based upon an unreflexive morality. He is not prepared to acknowledge the baseness of the Morlocks as at all human because it is grotesque. Their cannibalism is perhaps ultimately their most inhuman act, despite the commonness of the activity in human history.

The history of the Eloi and the Morlocks is one that has its own constitutive and product powers, as mapped out by the speculative explanations of the Time Traveller. What is ambiguous in this semantic structure of narrative is where such power lies: In the historical forces that have shaped the separation and development of two distinct species of humanity, or the interpretative historical narrative offered by the Time Traveller? The tentative answer to this would be to point out the tautological nature of the question, that, firstly, they are within the semantic and diegetic structure of the novel, and secondly, within such an interpretative scheme as suggested by Butler, there is no clear distinction between the account (or more significantly the source of the account) of the historical forces, and those forces themselves. One might be read merely as a reiteration of the other. However, outside of this closed circuit represented here is a new process of coming into being, made possible by the breakdown of social and physically constituted forms of reiterative authority. Even though the narration of such a process necessitates a prudent and thorough degree of self consciousness and self deprecation, this is a radical experiment in subjectivity.

There is undoubtedly an internalised set of ideals relating to heterosexual attraction and stability projected by the Time Traveller onto Weena and their relationship, but this seems to fall short of actually accounting for the relationship. This relationship is a new and unique event and contains a suggestive radical

critique.²⁴⁹ Wells shares with Butler a desire to highlight the socially constructed nature of sex and subjectivity, and implicit within this critical impulse is the suggestion of new and reflexive approaches. The relationship between the Time Traveller and Weena is perhaps a positive enactment of performative materialisation. It is independent of the durably inscribed historical forces and social conditioning that makes up the irreversible split between the Eloi and the Morlocks. It is also distant from, although still related to, the wild de-humanisation of the Time Traveller and his violent tendencies towards murder.

Butler conceives of sex as neither a simple function of material differences nor as a form of difference caused singularly by discourse. Rather, at the very least, these must be material differences that are both marked and formed by discursive practices. None of these things are in place in any familiar configuration that could reductively account for the relationship between the Time Traveller and Weena in terms of sexuality and its normative categories. This relationship seems in need of some active and creative interpretation by the Time Traveller, as do his activities in general. Yet it is that relationship, in part, that serves to restrain the Time Traveller from his murderous impulses. His sense of responsibility to Weena is in effect constituting a new regulatory framework in which bodily actions and constitutive subjecthood may take place. This judgement of restraint in the face of a new and violent set of sensibilities is a rationalisation, relating not only to a recognised need to stay with and protect Weena, but also to a speculative outcome relating to the Time Machine itself: a makeshift moral framework lashed together by immediate and practical concerns.

The restraint and containment offered by this bespoke set of constitutive guidelines is, however, short lived. An incident of restrained murderous impulse takes place in the so-called Palace of Green Porcelain, an enormous museum of relics that includes artefacts from the Time Traveller's own present, as well as his relative past and future. Upon coming across an iron lever, the Time Traveller imagines it as an instrument of both specific utility - the opening of the bronze doors at the base of the Sphinx where he believes his Machine has been hidden - and as a mace more than sufficient for the crushing of a Morlock skull. Thus armed, together

with his possession of a box of improbably but perfectly preserved matches and a quantity of camphor, lends him a sense of both purposeful hope and vigorous confidence:

Towards sunset I began to consider our position. Night was creeping upon us, and my inaccessible hiding-place had still to be found. But that troubled me very little now. I had in my possession a thing that was, perhaps, the best of all defences against the Morlocks – I had matches!²⁵⁰

This confidence is bodily. It is a revived state, or possibly new-found state, of vigour and physical strength against the Morlocks. However, it is, at least partially, accounted for by the most simple of material possessions – a box of matches. What seems to have occurred is a dissolution of clear differentiation between an anatomically defined embodied subjectivity of the Time Traveller, and the most quotidian and humble of worldly things. One is absorbed into the possibility of the other. To possess the matches is to transform the status and possibilities of the Time Traveller. His plans, confidence, and even susceptibility to fatigue, seem to have been altered by these objects.

Patrick Parrinder has employed the significance of matches in *The Time Machine* in order to make a claim for what he describes as the Time Traveller's 'Promethean ancestry'. According to Parrinder, there are points of connection – the violent thunderstorm in which the Time Traveller arrives, the violent emotionalism of elation and despair – to not only a generic sense of gothic melodrama, but specifically Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, subtitled *The Modern Prometheus*. This subtitle is given in allusion to the myth of Prometheus as the creator of humanity. Parrinder argues that just as Prometheus was a Titan, 'the Traveller is identified with the race of 'giants' who preceded the Eloi and the Morlocks and built the great palaces.'²⁵¹ This relationship and status of semi-divinity is demonstrated by the Eloi who asks if the Time Traveller has come from the sun. However, Parrinder's model of the Time Traveller as Prometheus is most cogently demonstrated by the matches in the novel:

He brings a box of matches with him, and when they run out he steals another box from the Palace of Green Porcelain. Prometheus stole fire from Zeus and brought it down to earth as a gift concealed in a stalk of fennel, to show his friendship for suffering humanity. But neither the frugivorous Eloi nor the half-blind Morlocks are fit recipients for the gift of fire. Future humanity has degenerated so much that the Traveller's matches are used only as purposeless toys, or in self-defence against the Morlocks.²⁵²

So the Time Traveller is linked, through the matches to a general analogy with Prometheus, suggesting the possibility of a further mutability in his status as an embodied subject, with a figure who is pre-human, and also associated, through images of classical antiquity, with its ideal and most vigorous forms. Yet like the presence of bodies in *The Time Machine*, the status and role of matches is not stable. Parrinder's very account lays out a wildly varied trajectory for matches in the narrative. From toy to amuse the Eloi, to hopeful reinvigoration for the protagonist.

The Promethean connection made visible by the Time Traveller's bringing of fire to this world is also, in Parrinder's account, connected to his final disappearance:

Can it be that – punished for his daring to set out to discover the future in defiance of the gods – his fate is to remain bound to his machine, condemned to perpetual time travelling just as Prometheus was bound to a rock and condemned to perpetual torture?²⁵³

While this suggested reading of the Time Traveller's ultimate fate is tenuously conjectural to say the least, the negative and destructive aspect that the match ultimately plays is made visible in much more concrete and straightforward terms in the novel. Whereas this discovery of matches in the Palace is one of embodied hope and confidence, the same matches then go on to play an active part in the chaotic, violent and somewhat tragic end to the Time Traveller's stay in the future: 'In the

end his playing with fire causes reckless destruction including, it would seem, the death of Weena who is the one friend he has made in the new world.’²⁵⁴ So while his sense of physical vulnerability and impotence is temporarily negated by his possession, and assimilation, of the box of matches, the consequences of their use will ultimately be devastatingly ruinous. Although this account suggests that through the possession, use and then further theft of fire, the body of the Time Traveller is one that can be likened to a mythical Titan, within the diegetic flow this new found confidence through the physical extension of the body through acquired objects is easily countered. The actuality of executing the plan to force open the doors at the base of the Sphinx is dependent on yet another stage in the materialisation of the bodies of both the Time Traveller and Weena, of further experimental testing of their capabilities and limits:

My plan was to go as far as possible that night, and then, building a fire, to sleep in the protection of its glare. Accordingly, as we went along I gathered any sticks or dried grass I saw, and presently had my arms full of such litter. Thus loaded, our progress was slower than I had anticipated, and besides Weena was tired. And I, also, began to suffer from sleepiness too;²⁵⁵

Here is bodily materialization defined by the straightforward ability to pick up and hold sticks or dried grass, and walk with the load. What is not clear is whether or not there is a distinction in the limitations expressed between Weena and the Time Traveller. Weena is described as ‘tired’, whereas the Time Traveller admits that he begins ‘to suffer from sleepiness’. Implied, perhaps, is a sustained distinction between the frailty of Eloi physiology in comparison with late nineteenth-century humanity. Is Weena’s tiredness because she is physically lacking in strength and stamina? As for the load-carrying shortcomings of the Time Traveller, they are accounted for in a further exposition of his lack of sleep: ‘I had been without sleep for a night and two days, and I was feverish and irritable.’²⁵⁶ This is no ordinary tiredness or weakness, but an intense and unstable condition brought on by sleep depravation, made more disturbing by the correlation between the impending and

immanent approach of both that elusive and much needed sleep, and the Morlocks: 'I felt sleep coming upon me, and the Morlocks with it.' While the plan to find a safe refuge had been suspended, the price of such an action makes itself a most unambiguously present and embodied danger.

What follows in the narrative is ultimately the failure of the Time Traveller's plan to construct a protective fire that will allow him to sleep safe from the advance of the Morlocks. This failure is determined by physical limitations, and results in the dramatic climax of the period spent in the year 802,701. These physical limitations not only accounted for by the onset of tiredness, whether muscular or due purely to lack of sleep, but also by the Time Traveller's ability to simultaneously carry firewood and hold lit matches – required primarily as a defence against the oncoming Morlocks. This body, while perhaps Promethean in connotation, is bound fatefully by the most quotidian of restrictions.

The Time Traveller is constantly reminded of the limited and crude reality of his corporeal existence, and it is generally an uncomfortable, if not life-threatening, experience. This is first made apparent in his initial journey into the future. The journey itself is unpleasant in its extreme physicality, that is in the intensity of its effects upon the body:

I am afraid I cannot convey the peculiar sensations of time travelling. They are excessively unpleasant. There is a feeling exactly like that one has upon a switchback – of a helpless headlong motion! I felt the same horrible anticipation, too, of an imminent smash.²⁵⁷

These are both actual, in the sensation of motion, and psychic, in the fearful sense of expected impact.

Stupidity and a peculiar lack of common sense and forethought also characterise the violent cessation of the journey to 802,701. For all the brilliance and scientific prowess required for the execution of such a singular invention as the time machine, the most logical of problems regarding the process of stopping the machine suddenly presents itself to the Time Traveller as he hurtles through time: 'The

peculiar risk lay in the possibility of my finding some substance in the space which I, or the machine, occupied.²⁵⁸ His body is suddenly exposed to risk of materialising within other matter, and hence being violently destroyed. This danger exposes the boy of the Time Traveller to an odd predicament; that his body is analogous to any other form of matter. There is nothing unique in his organic and sentient status as an embodied subject. He is made of the same stuff as everything else on the planet. He is comprised of molecules that constitute solid matter in space. The essential form of survival for this materialised being is that it occupies that space singularly. If it were to materialise within other matter, then that state of being would come to an abrupt end. Judith Butler's description of the body as a process of materialisation is given a potentially horrific literalness. However, the overall sense of equivalence serves as a useful metaphor for the general status of bodies as materiality and material culture in *The Time Machine*. That ultimately bodies are like any other form of artefact, structure or landscape.

The Time Traveller likens the status of his body and the machine in temporal transit as 'slipping like a vapour through the interstices of intervening substances!'²⁵⁹ In the event of such a violent rematerialisation as coming to a stop within some other solid form, which he envisions as involving 'the jamming of myself, molecule by molecule, into what ever lay in my way',²⁶⁰ the Time Traveller speculates that to stop within an obstacle in the future would result in the following disaster:

(...) meant bringing my atoms into such intimate contact with those of the obstacle that a profound chemical reaction – possibly a far-reaching explosion – would result, and blow myself and my apparatus out of all possible dimensions – into the Unknown.²⁶¹

That such a serious and suddenly obvious concern should only present itself as a serious matter for consideration at this point appears as nothing short of idiotic: 'This possibility had occurred to me again and again while I was making the machine; but then I had cheerfully accepted it as an unavoidable risk'.²⁶² The sequential consequence of one kind of stupidity in regarding physical embodiment in

terms of this kind of threat and crude limitation leads to another equally embarrassing mistake.

This mistake is overly-rapid manner in which the journey is terminated, brought about through panic in the face of what had been cheerfully accepted as an avoidable risk now becoming horribly inevitable. However, the state of panic induced by the realisation of this ill thought through plan is exacerbated by the physical and psychic effects of the journey upon the Time Traveller. Not only in a state of panic due to the likelihood of total physical annihilation that could be brought about through stopping within space already occupied, the Time Traveller's judgement is also clouded by the physical effects of the unnerving process of time travel:

The fact is that, insensibly, the absolute strangeness of everything, the sickly jarring and swaying of the machine, above all, the feeling of prolonged falling, had absolutely upset my nerve.²⁶³

What might be seen as the characteristic bad judgement or stupidity that the Time Traveller is guilty of, or defined by throughout the novel, is not brought to being here purely through an oversight (such as not addressing the problem of rematerialisation), or bodily limitation (the inability to carry firewood and brandish matches at the Morlocks), but through the overwhelming bodily sensations that he is subjected to when in temporal motion. His judgement, and actions, become effected by a form of travel sickness, likened to the effect of being on an amusement ride. In addition, he also describes a 'confusion' in his ears, which is both a symptom of the effects of time travel and a metaphor for his irrational status. His actions are an irrational response to a situation that he can do nothing about:

I told myself that I could never stop, and with a gust of petulance I resolved to stop forthwith. Like an impatient fool, I lugged over the lever, and incontinently the thing went reeling over, and I was flung headlong through the air.²⁶⁴

And he calls himself a fool once more immediately after the abrupt end to his journey through time, when he is thrown off the machine and onto soft turf in the middle of a hail storm: 'Presently I thought what a fool I was to get wet.'²⁶⁵ One way to think of the totality of this frame of mind that has been brought about by the sudden realisation of this crises is a sudden realisation of his more general sense of vulnerability brought about by the realisation of his status as raw, and fragile, matter.

Judgement and physical limitation are conflated and inseparable at the most fundamental, and therefore most banal level. This form of physical stupidity is one that manifests itself once the Time Traveller is separated and cut off from his own world. It is a new form of being, a process of materialisation that comes into effect as soon as he becomes an 'anachronism', in the most literal sense of being cut off from his own time. Not only is he separated physically and temporally, but the reiterative and sustaining social and bodily practices that constitute embodied subjectivity in a particular form, as Butler describes the maintenance of sexual difference, are no longer effective. He is severed from the processes that keep his body in its materialised form as a culturally-specific late nineteenth male body. His new form is thus one of that often appears as one of confusion and insecurity, clumsiness and bad judgement – almost adolescent in its awkwardness.

The articulation of the Time Traveller's body as one of instability and of often questionable judgement is most dramatically realised perhaps in the extreme conditions that lead to the climax of his visit in 802,701. Brought about by the immanent approach of sleep and Morlocks, one of which will ensure the fatal coming of the other, and unable to carry firewood and fend off the Morlocks with matches, the Time Traveller plans to escaped from the grassy scrubland to a nearby hillside where they might rest in safety. To aid their safe passage, he lights the firewood that he can not carry. What is initially considered as 'ingenious'²⁶⁶, is subsequently realised to be an 'atrocious folly'.²⁶⁷ The 'atrocious folly' of this idea and act is that this was an environment in which not only modern people as such were absent, but also fire. Both the landscape and the population had forgotten fire: 'In this decadence, too, the art of fire-making had been forgotten on the earth.'²⁶⁸

When lit, this initially small fire has a pronounced effect upon Weena: 'The red tongues that went licking up my heap of wood were an altogether new and strange thing to Weena.' While the fire itself takes on an almost bestial character, with its red tongues licking the pile of firewood, Weena's response is a reminder of her alterity. She is not human as such; rather she is characterised by indeterminacy, to the extent that her resemblance to a human is made ambiguous. Her animal-like response to fire, wanting to play with, even to cast herself into it, is a harsh characterisation of Weena as ab-human. Her indeterminate status is one where she is not quite adult, not quite female, not quite a child.

During this episode, in which the Promethean yet idiotic Time Traveller inadvertently starts a cataclysmic forest fire, in which he and Weena are at the centre, his body is manifested in its most extreme physicality, and his actions become a desperate set of necessary measures for survival, that seem determined purely by those conditions. He is no longer the civilized being he was, but one of immediate and violent response. As he heads towards possible safety, away from the fire he has started and the Morlocks that lurk and pursue through the undergrowth, his lumpen and straightforward physicality is emphasised:

For some way I heard nothing but the crackling twigs under my feet, the faint rustle of the breeze above, and my own breathing and the throb of the blood-vessels in my ears.²⁶⁹

In the darkness, his senses are reduced to the identification of the most basic of sounds, of his body's interaction with the environment as he crushes and breaks the twigs beneath his feet, of the sound of the wind in the trees, and his own blood as it courses at an accelerated rate through his body. He is like a machine that can hear the operation of its own mechanisms. The final approach of the Morlocks in the pursuit is observed as an interruption of these self-contained observations:

Then I seemed to know of a pattering about me. I pushed on grimly. The pattering grew more distinct, and then I caught the same queer sounds and voices I had heard in the Under-world.

Like the Time Traveller's, their bodies appear in this passage as a series of aural phenomena, as unseen sounds in the darkness. Without the benefit of the Time Traveller's vision as an accurate source of narration, the chase and impending conflict of the Time Traveller with the Morlocks is rendered as a primal series of subjectively experienced noises – the sound of his feet in the undergrowth, the throbbing of his own pulse in his ears. The Morlocks, however, possess voices. They are the ones capable of rational communication as they hunt down the now animal-like Time Traveller. The status of these bodies as abhuman here incorporates all of the characters, so that there is a degree of uncertainty that falls over not only the hideous Morlocks, but also the nearly-bestial Time Traveller. There is no stable or noble humanity here.

As the Morlocks catch the Time Traveller, they are still a non-visual presence, but a monstrously haptic one:

Indeed, in another minute I felt a tug at my coat, then something at my arm. (...) Soft little hands, too, were creeping over my coat and back, touching even my neck.²⁷⁰

Weena's response is animal-like. When the Morlocks first grab the Time Traveller in this chase, she has a peculiar reaction: 'And Weena shivered violently, and became quite still.'²⁷¹ After he has placed her on the ground, in order to light a match to fend off the Morlocks, her condition seems to have deteriorated further:

She was lying clutching my feet and quite motionless, with her face to the ground. With a sudden fright I stooped to her. She seemed scarcely to breathe. (...) She seemed to have fainted.²⁷²

This is Weena at her most abhuman – her status one of indeterminacy regarding whether she is actually alive or dead, which is to be her ultimate fate in the novel.

Throughout this narrative sequence, which builds dramatically from the exploration of the Palace of Green Porcelain and rushes headlong into his desperate escape from the year 802,701, the Time Traveller's Promethean idiocy is in full swing. After having flung a lit block of camphor on the forest floor, he makes an awful realisation:

In manoeuvring with my matches and Weena, I had turned myself about several times, and now I had not the faintest idea in what direction lay my path.²⁷³

The Time Traveller loses all sense of physical orientation. His sense of physical isolation and vulnerability is accentuated by this condition of being totally, and stupidly, lost. This situation is indexically manifested by a physiological response in the Time Traveller: 'I found myself in a cold sweat.'²⁷⁴ The emphasis of this response is one that clearly marks out his bodily reaction as one that is not brought about through laborious exertion, but from the increasing horror of his predicament. Weena has entered a death-like state, and the Time Traveller's own death seems immanent. Rather than attempt to flee, he puts down Weena and sets about fuelling with sticks and leaves the camphor-induced blaze that defines an unstable perimeter against the encroaching Morlocks, whose eyes 'shone like carbuncles'²⁷⁵ from the darkness around him.

As the camphor flame dwindles, he is reduced to lighting matches for defence, and his ultimate bodily manifestation as an instrument of brutal physical retribution commences:

The camphor flickered and went out. I lit a match, and as I did so, two white forms that had been approaching Weena dashed hastily away. One was so blinded by the light that he came straight for me, and I felt his bones grind under the blow of my fist.²⁷⁶

The abhuman response to even a small flame, and the extremity of its panicked response, seem to make it, for the Time Traveller, all the more appropriate as a subject of violence. In this action, the Morlock is reduced to nothing more than a grotesque animal of lumpen, yet frail materiality. Its abhuman bones grind beneath the fist of a human, his hand shaped into a tool, one that is knowingly crafted, a learnt skill for making a weapon out of the body itself. The fist is the trained response of organised culture, under which the degenerate cannibalistic bones of the Morlocks are ground. Yet this vanquished foe is not an animal: 'He gave a whoop of dismay, staggered a little way, and fell down'.²⁷⁷ The ability to vocally communicate an emotional response is disturbing. It is both perhaps similar to the noise that a dog might make, but also disturbingly anthropomorphic. When he fights a group that have overpowered him, he describes shaking off 'the human rats'²⁷⁸ from his body. While like animals, the Morlocks' link to humanity still grant the violence committed by the Time Traveller a savagely murderous consequence.

The excitable state of the Time Traveller as a destructive engine is accentuated by his strenuous efforts to maintain his defensive fire. Noticing how dry the branches above his head were, he jumps up to drag them down to the ground. Once the fire is replenished he needs to rest: 'I felt very weary after my exertion, and sat down'.²⁷⁹ He is also uncertain as to whether or not Weena still lives. Yet he still is unable to stop the involuntary response to his need for sleep. As he seems to drift off for an instant, he awakes to the touch of the Morlocks, and realises to his despair that the fire has gone out, and that he has lost his box of matches. The Time Traveller enters into a new and mutable bodily state, first as helpless victim, and then as a retaliatory destroyer of the Morlocks. His body is overcome:

I was caught by the neck, by the hair, by the arms, and pulled down. It was indescribably horrible in the darkness to feel all these soft creatures heaped upon me. I felt as if I was in a monstrous spider's web. I was overpowered, and went down. I felt little teeth nipping at my neck.²⁸⁰

He is described purely in terms of their grotesque touch, no more than what is defined by the pawing hands of his assailants, who mean no less than to consume the flesh from his body, to disincorporate his physical being for their own sustenance.

Yet in the desperate struggle to maintain any sovereignty of what might constitute the embodied subjectivity of his own life, the Time Traveller makes an accidental discovery: 'I rolled over, and as I did so my hand came against my iron lever. It gave me strength'.²⁸¹ It is a truly Promethean moment, of his transformation from helpless victim to sentient and empowered, technologically-sophisticated human. This rebirth is akin to one of initial becoming. It is a sudden process of materialisation. That the Time Traveller should undergo this process of transformation in which his humanity is both rediscovered and redescribed is a grim indictment on Wells's part of the base reality of the species. Endowed with new strength, and reshaped with an extended and indefatigably destructive limb, the Time Traveller struggles to his feet, and shakes from him what he calls 'the human rats'. This serves as an image of the Time Traveller as a kind of titanic figure, like a mythic warrior or super hero, able to cast his now inferior assailants in the mere act standing, like Gulliver shaking off Lilliputians from his giant body.

This image rapidly dissolves into a more grotesque manifestation: '(,) holding the bar short, I thrust where I judged their faces might be. I could feel the succulent giving of flesh and bone under my blows, and for a moment I was free'.²⁸² This description, as well as a disturbingly graphic account of the Time Traveller's acts of violence committed in darkness, hence the emphasis on the haptic sensations, also seems to reverse the reduction of his own body to nothing but raw food for the Morlocks. The account of this bodily damage as 'succulent' has a peculiar resonance in conjuring an idea of the materiality and consumption of food. And that this is essentially what this conflict revolves around does not leave the mind of the Time Traveller:

The strange exultation that so often seems to accompany hard fighting came upon me. I knew that both I and the Weena were lost, but I determined to make the Morlocks pay for their meat.²⁸³

Yet not only is he faced with this resolution of the crudest of bodily states, as a source of food, this sees the completion of the process of coming into being that was first hinted at by the murderous impulses accounted for in the Palace of Green Porcelain. That without the consistent reiterative process of normative and hegemonic social practices to define him, such impulses have been increasingly present in the constitution of his embodied subjectivity. The Time Traveller's only restraint in the Palace of Green Porcelain had been the presence of Weena. In part, his violence was repressed by a need to remain with her, but perhaps her presence also served as a form of social gaze. She is both Foucaultian discipline, brought about through the literal surveillance of her observation, and the implicit suggestion of a modern moral framework, and imaginary other, constituting an internalised psychic Lacanian gaze. Without this imagined order brought about through the other, the Time Traveller's apparently fatal predicament becomes an unhindered opportunity to enter into a new temporary state of embodied being.

This exultation is short lived. The fires started by the Time Traveller escalate into a raging forest fire, which drives the Morlocks into a state of blind panic. Finding himself trapped upon a hill for refuge from the flames, the Time Traveller violence towards the Morlocks begins to subside when he realises the extent of their incapacity in the face of the overwhelming blaze:

Upon the hill-side were some thirty or forty Morlocks, dazzled by the light and heat, and blundering hither and thither against each other in their bewilderment. At first I did not realize their blindness, and struck furiously at them with my bar, in a frenzy of fear, as they approached me, killing one and crippling several more. But when I had watched the gesture of one of them groping under the hawthorn against the red sky, and heard their moans, I was assured of their absolute helplessness and misery in the glare, and I struck no more of them.²⁸⁴

As the fire has grown, the violent rage of the Time Traveller subsides. Conversely, as the fire begins to die down, he fears that the Morlocks blindness will also disappear, rendering him once again as vulnerable prey to their cannibalistic appetites:

At one time the flames died down somewhat, and I feared the foul creatures would presently be able to see me. I was even thinking of beginning the fight by killing some of them before this should happen; but the fire burst out again brightly, and I stayed my hand.²⁸⁵

The actions of the Morlocks are certainly abhuman and beastlike. They are unable to see in the bright light of the flames and they are driven into a frenzied state of suicidal panic, running into the fire itself. However, the behaviour of the Time Traveller is hardly any more civilized in his ability to rationalise the chaos and destruction that surrounds him, isolated upon the hillside, surrounded by flames and desperate Morlocks:

For the most part of that night I was persuaded it was a nightmare. I bit myself and screamed in a passionate desire to awake. I beat the ground with my hands, and got up and sat down again, and wandered here and there, and again sat down.²⁸⁶

The Time Traveller's behaviour seems to not only operate in sympathetic conjunction with the rising and subsiding of the surrounding flames, but here seems to mimic the bestiality of the Morlocks. These actions have a peculiar animal-like quality to them, almost suggestive of a captive ape as might be on display at a zoo, beating the ground and aimlessly pacing the space of its cage. This is the condition of the Time Traveller as embodied subject in the face of this apocalyptic carnage. His breakdown on the hillside marks a dramatic climax within the narrative. This climactic moment is not only one of narrative, but also, perhaps, materialisation. As he beats the ground, and 'rubbing my eyes and calling upon God to let me awake',²⁸⁷

the Time Traveller embodies the extreme synthesis of the Promethean and the stupid. The flames, the result of his own reckless bringing of fire to the future, encircle him and dictate the actions of his body.

The unstable condition of the Time Traveller's body serves as an analogue of the novel as a dramatic and thematic structure. The tensions of the diegetic sequence that serve as a dramatic climax to his exploration of 802, 701, as well as the overt substructure of degeneration that is the novel's moral content, are played out within the erratic destabilisations and materialisations of the Time Traveller as an embodied subject. Weena's role appears to complement the shifts and transformations undergone by the Time Traveller. But this is not to suggest that she is a mere cypher for the embodied subjectivity of the male protagonist, no matter how fragile the constitution of sex might be. Rather Weena's final status in the novel is one of ultimate abhuman indeterminacy. Her abhuman status is defined in opposition to that of the Morlocks. She responds to the attack by the Morlocks by at first shivering, then passing out in a faint-like condition. Her repulsion towards them seems even more drastic than that of the Time Traveller; an embodied trauma is so great that the Time Traveller can not even tell whether she is breathing or not after he places her body on the forest floor. This is echoed by her final disappearance as the Time Traveller loses her amidst the chaos of forest fire and Morlocks. Weena's disappearance is one of finality, yet uncertainty. It is emphatically reiterated by the Time Traveller's failure to subsequently find any evidential trace of her, or indication of exactly what her fate was. There is an explicit and almost painful ambiguity to her disappearance. This is death as a manifestly abhuman form. Instead of a body securely bounded and stable fate, Weena's demise is an undifferentiated spectacle, a symptom of the diegetic crescendo, rendered as a permeable set of conditions that deny her a clearly differentiated bodily termination. Enduring a fate of ultimate indeterminacy, Weena's disappearance and apparent death – mirrored by the Time Traveller's own disappearance - is the apotheosis of uncertainty within the novel.

Uncertainty characterises the body of the narrative itself, in a form that is more fundamental than a mere thematic tendency within the descriptions of the

embodied subjects themselves. As a social medium in which the construction of bodies may occur, it is full of the qualities set out by Hurley as forms of abhuman physicality. The field of the narrative is one, as Hurley describes abhuman bodies, of a spectacle of undifferentiated forms metamorphic states of existence. As a *fin-de-siècle* Gothic narrative that is simultaneously a form of thesis on degeneration, the 'gothicity' of *The Time Machine* is one that is rendered, I would suggest, as a doubled image. Hurley suggests that degeneration itself is not so much a stable, objective and scientific form, but is one that is already gothic in character. By elevating this characteristic narrative element of *fin-de-siècle* Gothic to the status of the novel's most overt thematic concern, Wells presents us with a text that is uniquely reflexive as a form of gothic discourse. Not only is its character one that is rendered by the qualities of the abhuman that the *fin-de-siècle* Gothic is most exemplified by, but is itself an openly critical form of discourse on those very qualities as articulated by broader discussions of degeneration. Yet despite granting *The Time Machine* an intriguingly layered condition, the identification of the prevalent theme of degeneration is not intended as a device with which to iron flat the textured surface of the novel and the presence of bodies as materiality and material culture within it. Rather, it is of more value here to focus on the notion of uncertainty as an abhuman form, itself a symptomatic and causal condition of degenerative discourses. Exemplified by the horrific dissolution of Weena into an ultimate status of indeterminate being, uncertainty characterises the entire novel, and I would suggest, therefore determines the processes of materialises that bodies find themselves subject to within it.

Hurley describes *fin-de-siècle* Gothic as a set of accounts of interstitial becomings, of metamorphoses and indifferentiation, as human bodies between species. This certainly reflects the bodies of *The Time Machine*. The Time Traveller himself spends, as I have attempted to argue, the duration of his visit to the future in a bodily condition of unstable becoming, separated from the regulatory framework of a normative social context. More explicit are the bodies of the Eloi and Morlocks, as species that are part-human, descended from, but not quite the same as the Time Traveller, or as us. Their bodies are consistently depicted in an indeterminate

manner, oscillating between different registers and as defying any state of secure or familiar corporeal stability. In a moment of reversal, the very physicality of the Time Traveller represents exactly this form of uncertainty to the Eloi, in a rare display of curiosity. Upon first encountering them one of the Eloi addresses the Time Traveller through at first through speech, and then through touch:

He came a step forward, hesitated, and then touched my hand. Then I felt other soft little tentacles upon my back and shoulders. They wanted to make sure I was real.²⁸⁸

The sense of uncertainty of whether or not the other is real is a shared one, and in the very act of Eloi investigation, the sensation of their haptic validation of his existence upon the body the Time Traveller is decidedly abhuman, their hands described as ‘soft little tentacles’, suggestive of a monstrous distortion rather than anything resembling an encounter with familiar human anatomy. That this monstrous quality excites no fearful reaction in the Time Traveller is accounted for by a sense that there was ‘something in these pretty little people that inspired confidence – a graceful gentleness, a certain childlike ease.’²⁸⁹ Greater confidence is afforded by the Time Traveller’s physical superiority over the Eloi, in the sense of stature and apparent strength: ‘And besides, they looked so frail that I could fancy myself flinging the whole dozen of them about like nine-pins.’²⁹⁰ Nevertheless, while the Eloi touch to eradicate uncertainty, the sensation of their touch merely acts to exacerbate their indeterminate status from the normative perspective of the Time Traveller. The speech that precedes this act of physical contact is equally destabilising as an impression. The Time Traveller first hears one Eloi address two others in ‘a strange and very sweet and liquid tongue’.²⁹¹ It is unfamiliar, obviously, but more significantly characterised as ‘liquid’, a state that seems to suggest the very qualities of unstable, merging and fluid qualities that Hurley suggests. When an Eloi then speaks to the Time Traveller directly, he is surprised by the contrast between sound and appearance: ‘It came into my head, oddly enough, that my voice was too harsh and deep for them.’²⁹² The relationship between sound and appearance is

rendered as a broken one, without a consistent link to formulate a stable whole. Rather the two jar as irreconcilable elements.

The uncertainty that distorts the stable materialisation of bodies in *The Time Machine* is reflected as a general tendency throughout the novel. The model that the Time Traveller uses in his initial demonstration for his guests, a miniaturised prototype of the machine he uses for his own journey, generates just such a sense of unresolved ambiguity. Between them, he and the guests are unable to account for exactly what has happened to this model, or where or when it might be. It simply vanishes out of the clarity and apparent stability of the modern interior, filled as it was with characters accounted for only as archetypes of disciplinary specialisation: Psychologist, Medical Man, Provincial Mayor. The analysis and interpretation of the social structure and history of 802,701 is also one shrouded in uncertainty. It is constructed from a series of speculative overviews, which shift and change with new information and discoveries. His final account, seen as definitive, is still only one of a narrow perspective, and by no means stands as an exhaustive and factually accurate exegesis. The narrative of the Time Traveller, is of course, the central point of uncertainty, in that its reception within the novel is one of disbelief. The Time Traveller himself begins to doubt its veracity, to the extent that he must look at the damaged machine as it stands in his laboratory in order to confirm his fantastic story in his own mind.

If uncertainty is a predominant form of characteristic that describes the overall presence of bodies in terms of materiality and material culture in the text, then I would also like to sustain its influence over a reading of *The Time Machine* as a discourse on degeneration. While the account of the abhuman forms of the bodies of the Eloi and Morlocks is one that articulates a clear sense of anxiety relating to degenerative discourses, this is mirrored by the rapid destabilisation of the Time Traveller himself. This occurs almost instantly upon his radical separation from his normative social context. Implied in this is the lack of stability in his status as a normative model of embodied masculinity. That as soon as he is detached from his own time, he is subject to shifts that are profoundly troubling in the context of degenerative anxiety. His stability of sexuality and moral evenness vanish and are

reformed by a new set of conditions in the future. Therefore, the narrative of the progress of humanity through the scale of social and evolutionary time is one of an unambiguous contribution to the form of discourse on the anxiety of degeneration, as exemplified by Nordau. However, the Time Traveller's own encounter with this world is one that displays a terrifying fragility of the normatively configured embodied subject, in such a way as to destabilise Nordau's own position. While for Nordau, aberrant types represented a threat to the maintenance of a morally concrete social order, Wells suggests that normativity itself is a contingent form, one that as Butler describes, is in need of constant reiterative input and support. Wells suggests that rather than being threatened by deviancy, there was no stability embodied in *fin de siècle* masculinity.

The bodily anxieties played out here are bound by a specific referent that finds material, bodily and social analogues within the text. While in the Palace of Green Porcelain, and undergoing the arming process that is to transform the body and potentialities of the Time Traveller as active agent, he comes across another potential tool in his struggle to survive and return to his own epoch: what he initially believes to be dynamite, a material that is relatively new to the Time Traveller's own epoch, being only invented by Alfred Nobel in 1867. Two dynamite cartridges are discovered in an airtight case, near a model of a tin-mine. However, after testing one of them in a side gallery of the museum, the Time Traveller realises that they are fakes, nothing but illustrative props that have happened to have survived for thousands of years. This incident does something to balance out the fortuitous discovery of the matches and camphor, by demonstrating the equal chance of finding something that turns out to be unusable, by balancing chance inducing luck with disappointment.²⁹³ Yet there is relief in this. In his unconstrained excitement and determination to retrieve his machine, the Time Traveller was prepared to take his violent actions to a possibly self-destructive extreme:

I really believe that, had they not been so, I should have rushed off incontinently and blown Sphinx, bronze doors, and (as it proved) my chances of finding the Time Machine, all together into non-existence.²⁹⁴

The Time Traveller's propensity for violence being tempered by an external factor, which in the absence of a normative regulatory framework for the constitution of embodied subjecthood, seems to provide one in a contingent or arbitrary manner. There is also, as Leon Stover suggests, a moral equivalence provided by this disappointment that relates in a much broader sense to the metaphorical connection to Thomas Carlyle's *Riddle of the Sphinx*. Stover suggests that the Time Traveller is relieved of a suicidal fantasy which would involve both the destruction of the Sphinx - the symbol of class relations that form the ontological seed of this future world, an originary spring from which the Eloi/Morlock split flows - as well as the Time Machine. Stover's reading is that the narrative makes it clear that the Morlocks deserve violence, and that their concealment of the Time Machine is 'a calculated act of entrapment, but the only safe way to confront them is to be more cunning than they.'²⁹⁵ This is ultimately a sustained reading of the allegory of the Sphinx:

The Sphinx problem cannot be solved by meeting the frontal violence of class war on its own destructive terms. Unionized labor must be subdued and made docile under a new directive elite given to uncontested controls that transcend internecine conflict.²⁹⁶

This reading, that is in part interpolation of Wells's long term social and historical views, renders the various forms of restraint that both limit and constitute the possibilities of violence as nothing more than political metaphor. This is interesting in that it is not just constituted through commentary or revealed authorial intention, but also through the narrated perspective of the Time Traveller in his attempts to rationalise and deal with the difficulties of his general predicament, and more specifically the horror at his realisation that the mankind's lazy decadence had led to the Eloi becoming food for the Morlocks, a realisation made more difficult by the sight of Weena dancing alongside him:

Then I tried to preserve myself from the horror that was coming upon me, by regarding it as a rigorous punishment of human selfishness. Man had been content to live in ease and delight upon the labours of his fellow-man, had taken Necessity as his watchword and excuse, and in the fulness of time Necessity had come home to him. I even tried a Carlyle-like scorn of this wretched aristocracy-in-decay. But this attitude of mind was impossible. However great their intellectual degradation, the Eloi had kept too much of the human form not to claim my sympathy, and to make me perforce a sharer in their degradation and their Fear.²⁹⁷

Yet the undoubted presence of Carlyle fails to account for what subsequently happens in the narrative, as well as how violence as both possibility and action is an integral element of constitutive bodies in the novel.

Chapter 4: Time and Temporality

A long duration is sublime. If it is of time past, then it is noble. If it is projected into an incalculable future, then it has something of the fearsome in it. A building of the remotest antiquity is venerable. Haller's description of the coming eternity stimulates a mild horror, and of the past, transfixed wonder.²⁹⁸

This chapter is predicated on an assumption that the presence of combined and various forms of time and temporality in *The Time Machine* are identifiable as suggested forms or manifestations of materiality and material culture. One such manner in which temporality and material culture converge is in the discourse of evolution, and the museological discourse identified in the novel, which exemplify the organisation of temporal representations through architecture and display. As perhaps a material form in itself, and certainly an element of the material world that the novel constitutes, time might be seen here as definable by its susceptibility to analysis and ultimately through its apprehension and realisation as a navigable substance. Likewise, the invention of the time machine itself serves to transform pre-Einsteinian time, into something that has both spatial substance and historical resonance. The most certain, yet utterly ambiguous, point on which the novel rests is the eponymous machine itself. It is the dramatic contrivance that Wells has introduced into his mimetic and concrete reality.

In *The Time Machine*, there is no attempt to explain how such a device might work, nor is there a detailed account of the appearance of the machine. Instead, this central object is described in terms of a few loose details. This does not seem accidental, as the attendance to one would necessitate the elaboration of the other. Specifying particular components would indicate operational instrumentality of some kind. It is impossible to discern whether the machine is constructed from a novel configuration of existing technologies, or if it relies on as yet unimagined agency. Its appearance is unfamiliar to the narrator, borne out by his inability to

provide an adequate account or a suitable comparative image. Its form is also of sufficient complexity to defy a straightforward description. A relatively comprehensive account of the machine actually refers to the working scale model used in a demonstration to an audience of assembled guests who meet at the Time Traveller's home:

The thing the Time Traveller held in his hand was a glittering metallic framework, scarcely larger than a small clock, and very delicately made. There was ivory in it, and some transparent crystalline substance.²⁹⁹

The sense of what this object is comes across as vague and its purpose utterly obscure. It is described only indirectly, in terms of its scale and the quality of its construction. There is a hint of some mysterious technology at work but this is not developed. Rather, the workmanship of the model is emphasised. The model is imbued with a sense of its value due to the recognition of the labour and temporal investment required to make the piece, together with the skilled use of seductive materials. This value is illuminated and accentuated by the sacrifice that is required by the act of demonstrating its operational function. The sacrificial aspect of the demonstration, involving the irretrievable loss of the model time machine, is made more poignant in the narrative by the incredulous reactions of the witnesses, which ultimately renders the performance as a display of irrational expenditure.

After the demonstration with the model, the actual machine is revealed, but little more is given away relating to how it functions or its appearance. The parts are suggestive of a machine with complex and finely crafted components and, as materials, have an odd, domestic familiarity. The Time Traveller's guests are also taken to see the machine after his return, although this time it is more to reassure himself than his audience of the veracity of his story. It bears damage and evidential traces that appear to corroborate his tale:

There in the flickering light of the lamp was the machine sure enough, squat, ugly, and askew; a thing of brass, ebony, ivory, and translucent glimmering

quartz. Solid to the touch – for I put out my hand and felt the rail of it – and with brown spots and smears upon the ivory, and bits of grass and moss upon the lower parts, and one rail bent awry.

The Time Traveller put the lamp down on the bench, and ran his hand along the damaged rail.³⁰⁰

Little more is revealed of it, except through fragments that build, incrementally constituting the qualitative presence of this machine. The vagueness of the form of the machine itself is a necessity, facilitating the introduction of an unknown technology as a narrative device. Bernard Bergonzi makes the following point relating to the vague rendering of the time machine: ‘The assemblage of details is strictly speaking meaningless but nevertheless conveys very effectively a sense of the machine without putting the author to the taxing necessity of giving a direct description.’³⁰¹ It could be suggested that this quality of vagueness has echoed through the genres of science fiction, where a stylistic blurring of practicalities can be used to provide coded and associative imagery. It is the idea of the coded and the associative that is important here, and I would differ from Bergonzi’s assertion that the fleeting descriptions of the machine can be accounted for out of a necessary and somewhat lazily driven sense of economy. Rather, *The Time Machine* can be seen as a formative point in the process of imagining technologies which remain ambiguous, yet are compiled out of a constructed set of generalities and specificities. How else could this form of technology be conceptualised, except through such a balance of vagueness and recognition? The play within this chain of signification relies upon a general familiarity with the specific differences between each mark.

From a contemporary perspective, *The Time Machine* enters into the field of influence of antique objects. Not only does it do so on account of its age, but also due to the material elements described. Brass, ebony and ivory assume a quality of temporal otherness to a contemporary perspective. Evocative of historical furniture and interiors. However, their presence within the text suggests an advanced moment of modernity, dependent on the technological processes of their production or refinement, and on structures of colonialism and international commerce that would

ensure their availability. These materials fluctuate between their status as contemporary, nineteenth-century technology, and their evoking of antique objects. But ultimately they gravitate towards modernity, as a complex of technological sophistication and a process of movement encompassed by the overarching structure of Empire, a spectre that haunts the novel as a material world.

Jean Baudrillard, in his early work *The System of Objects*, identified the clock, as an object that had vanished in later modernity, but that had formed a central part of the bourgeois interior. Within this context, the machine has qualities that equate it with a comforting and traditional domestic scenario:

... they capture time and strip it of surprises within the intimacy of a piece of furniture. There is nothing in the world more reassuring. The measuring of time produces anxiety when it serves to assign us to social tasks, but it makes us feel safe when it substantializes time and cuts it into slices like an object of consumption. Everybody knows from experience how intimate a ticking clock can make a place feel; the reason is that the clock's sound assimilates the place to the inside of our own body. The clock is a mechanical heart that reassures us about our own heart. It is precisely this process of infusion or assimilation of the substance of time, this presence of duration, which is rejected, just like all other returns to inwardness, by a modern order based on externality, spatiality and objective relationships.³⁰²

The actual purpose and effect of the machine is all the more disturbing for its resemblance to a clock, an inversion of a set of familiar values. It is also worth noting that in an interview conducted in 1897, in which he discusses the scientific romances that had so far been written, he seems to make a knowing reference to clocks and time:

Glancing at the clock, the journalist was horrified to see how late an hour had already been reached.

‘You have plenty of time to catch your train,’ said the novelist. ‘My clock has no connection to the solar system. It only tells me how long I have worked.’³⁰³

The clock in Wells’s home gives the interviewing journalist the false impression that the hour is later than he thought. However, it bears no connection to Greenwich or any fixed shared reference of time, it is merely a chronometer to measure the Wells’s working time.

Another account of the machine is given as the Time Traveller leaves 802,701:

One dial records days, another thousands of days, another millions of days, and another thousands of millions. Now, instead of reversing the levers I had pulled them over so as to go forward with them, and when I came to look at these indicators I found that the thousands hand was sweeping round as fast as the seconds hand of a watch – into futurity.³⁰⁴

The machine, with its dials that tell the date as a chronological statistic, is certainly allied to clocks and chronometers in nature and appearance.

Yet there is another field of mechanical instruments to which the machine bears a greater resemblance – the apparatuses of cinema in its formative stages. The potential to animate formerly still images, in particular lending itself to novelty and illusion,³⁰⁵ is paralleled by Wells’s manifestation of time travel. This propinquity was identified by Terry Ramsaye, in a comprehensive history of cinema from 1926³⁰⁶ and later reframed by Ann Friedberg.³⁰⁷ The account is of an inventor of early cinematic technologies, Robert W. Paul, who upon reading *The Time Machine* in 1895 recognized a similarity between the description of the machine in action and cinematic principles. In this Paul saw the potential to develop a new form of spectacle. Ramsaye concurs with the comparison:

A reading of *The Time Machine*, even now, leaves one with a strong impression that the story was born out of the direct suggestion of the behavior of a motion picture film. Wells, in a letter to the writer in 1924, said he was unable to remember details of the relation. But the evidence is such that if the story was not evolved directly from the experience of seeing the Kinetoscope, it was indeed an amazing coincidence.³⁰⁸

Descriptions of the machine may be scarce in Wells's text, but there are accounts of the visual effects of its operation, both from the point of view of the operator and, at the end of the novel, as witnessed briefly by the character Hillyer. The possibility of associating the time machine with forms of visual apparatus is first suggested after the Time Traveller demonstrates his working model. After it disappears, one of his guests asks: 'are you perfectly serious? Or is this a trick – like that ghost you showed us last Christmas?'³⁰⁹ This 'ghost' refers to a popular trick performed with a magic lantern. Creating the illusion of movement through the use of two glass slides, this trick from the previous year has been succeeded by the more advanced cinematic time machine.³¹⁰ The similarity between the machine and cinematic technology is illustrated in the descriptions of the beginning of the Time Traveller's journey to the future.

His first attempts at operating the machine are slow and cautious. At first he is so apprehensive that his initial journey is a jump of less than five and a half hours. The machine is operated by two levers, one to start and one to stop. Taking one in each hand, he presses on the starting lever and almost immediately operates the second. No visual effect is suggested. When he stops, he is at first unaware of any change. He then notices that the hands of a clock in his workshop have marked the duration of his trip. With nervous anticipation, he then operates the machine again. The view of the Time Traveller is described as if he had been watching a speeded up film sequence of his housekeeper, Mrs Watchett:

I drew a breath, set my teeth, gripped the starting lever with both hands, and went off with a thud. The laboratory got hazy and went dark. Mrs. Watchett

came in, and walked, apparently without seeing me, towards the garden door. I suppose it took her a minute or so to traverse the place, but to me she seemed to shoot across the room like a rocket.³¹¹

Ramsaye points out how, in the return trip, the effect is accentuated. As he approaches the day on which he left, the Time Traveller passes through the same scene in a manner that is identical to the effect of viewing film in reverse:

But now her every motion appeared to be the exact inversion of her previous ones. The door at the lower end opened, and she glided quietly up the laboratory, back foremost, and disappeared behind the door by which she had previously entered.³¹²

The key term picked up by Ramsaye in this passage is 'quietly'. This is interpreted, perhaps exaggeratedly so, as 'silently'. Wells does not actually describe these scenes as silent but he does not refer to sound as an experience of time travelling, with the exceptions of the initial 'thud' as the Time Traveller embarks and what is described as an 'eddying murmur' accompanied by a 'dumb confusedness'³¹³, symptoms of the general unpleasantness of the journey which gradually subside. For Ramsaye, the lack of sound is evidence of a cinematic precedent, in particular, forms of novelty peep show: 'One of the earliest novelty effects sought in the Kinetoscope in the days when it was enjoying scientific attention was in exactly this sort of reversal of commonplace bits of action.'³¹⁴ The scene is presented as pure image, there is no sound speeded up or reversed. Ramsaye argues that experimental phonograph reversals were also abundant, but that Wells seems to have concentrated exclusively on the visual: 'It would seem pretty definite that the Time Traveller was all eyes and the story all motion picture.'³¹⁵

In *The Time Machine*, Paul recognized the potential for a new narrative form, and met with Wells to discuss the idea, leading to Paul's application for a patent in October of 1895. The proposed device combined projection lanterns, scenery and machinery to simulate motion. Spectators would sit within a time machine situated

on a platform, suspended and rocked, while a current of air would circulate, to generate a sensation of movement. That the sensation of movement is experienced during time travel is an affirmation of Wells's notion of time as the fourth dimension, analogous the three spatial dimensions. To move through it is conceptualised as moving in the traditional sense. But this movement is ascribed very specific associations. During his first short hop, the Time Traveller feels 'a nightmare sensation of falling'³¹⁶. The sensations of time travel are described as unpleasant: 'There is a feeling exactly like that one has upon a switchback – of a helpless headlong motion! I felt the same horrible anticipation, too, of an imminent smash.'³¹⁷ The use of the term 'switchback' is of importance here, as it refers to a rollercoaster. It is these sensations that Paul wished to replicate as a form of narrative spectacle incorporating the thrills of an amusement park, but it is Wells who is already writing in a compatible language. Paul's unrealized plan was ambitious. Not only would spectators ride in a machine that appeared, through projected imagery and moving scenery, to be travelling in time, but they would be able to disembark at various points on the journey and be guided through sets depicting a epoch from the past or future.

Although never constructed, the imagined spectacle of time travel was mirrored, and in Paul's case usurped,³¹⁸ by the public demonstrations of the Lumière Brothers' projection device in December 1895. Friedberg sustains the resemblance to cinema in reference to Rene Clair's 1923 film *Paris Qui Dort* (*The Crazy Ray*). In the film a mad scientist has 'frozen' time using an experimental machine that emits an invisible ray. The characters who have not been affected because they were above its influence – the watchman of the Eiffel Tower and five passengers from an aircraft – explore a Paris in which motion has been suspended: 'The film narrativizes the animated tension between the mobility of the cinema camera and the immobility of the still photograph.'³¹⁹ As the effects of the ray are eventually reversed, frozen scenes are shown to return to a state of animation. The play on the temporality suggested within cinematic technology echoes that of *The Time Machine*. The fabric of temporality is suggested by a specific cultural and material association, that of

film. *Paris Qui Dort*, like *The Time Machine*, does not name this technology as its source, but rather illustrates it.

In film as a medium, time itself is ascribed a material referent. The Time Traveller's journey is likened to a controlled viewing of a strip of celluloid. Temporality is characterised by a fixed, linear sequence upon the printed reel. When Hillyer witnesses the Time Traveller's second departure at the end of the novel, his presence in the laboratory is marked on the strip of time and included in the account of the Time Traveller's previous return from the future: '...I seemed to see Hillyer for a moment; but he passed like a flash.'³²⁰

When travelling through time, in the cinematic fourth dimension, the Time Traveller and the machine have no detectable material presence in the three-dimensional space that they occupy. This is explored in the discussions that take place in the Time Traveller's home before his journey. After the small-scale demonstration and the mysterious disappearance of the model time machine, the Time Traveller admits that he does not know in which direction it has travelled, the future or the past. There follows a speculative discussion as to its current trajectory:

After an interval the Psychologist had an inspiration. 'It must have gone into the past if it has gone anywhere,' he said.

'Why?' said the Time Traveller.

'Because I presume that it has not moved in space, and if it travelled into the future it would still be here all this time, since it must have travelled through this time.'

'But,' said I, 'if it travelled into the past it would have been visible when we came first into this room; and last Thursday when we were here; and the Thursday before that; and so forth!'³²¹

An answer, explained at the Time Traveller's prompting by a guest known as the Psychologist, refers to perception and provides another association with moving image technologies:

We cannot see it, nor can we appreciate this machine, any more than we can the spoke of a wheel spinning, or a bullet flying through the air. If it is travelling through time fifty times or a hundred times faster than we are, if it gets through a minute while we get through a second, the impression it creates will of course be only one-fiftieth or one-hundredth of what it would make if it were not travelling in time. That's plain enough.' He passed his hand through the space in which the machine had been. 'You see?' he said, laughing.³²²

The visual effect of its invisibility – and its immateriality – is generated by the speed of its movement, like film travelling too fast, it is incompatible with human perception, beyond a threshold of comprehension. If like film, the view of a time traveller can be characterised by Walter Benjamin's optical unconscious, the view of the machine from the outside is its inverse. Whereas Benjamin saw the reproductive technologies of photography and film as a means to see what had previously been invisible, a view permitted to the passenger travelling through time, this technology is one, from the outside, of convenient invisibility.

It is clear that the machine is not present, as such, in the time through which it moves. This is a detail that needed to be thought through, but one that has become typical of the forms of genre codification established in the twentieth century. The machine and its passenger are removed from three dimensional materiality for the duration of the journey, and reappear, rematerialise, only when the artificial temporal motion has ceased. This raises the problem of shared space, or put another way, the problem of stopping:

(...) to come to stop involved the jamming of myself, molecule by molecule, into whatever lay in my way: meant bringing my atoms into such intimate contact with those of the obstacle that a profound chemical reaction – possibly a far reaching explosion – would result, and blow myself and my apparatus out of all possible dimensions – into the Unknown.³²³

The displacement of the machine and passenger from everyday three dimensional materiality creates the possibility of this otherwise impossible violent contact, a destructive intimacy of matter at an atomic scale.³²⁴

An earlier version of the novel, *The Time Traveller's Story* (1894), explores the immateriality of the time machine in motion and the risk of sharing the space with another object as elements of a single phenomenon. When questioned as to how a time traveller could pass in time through a space that may be occupied, the immateriality is again explained by the speed of motion, but here it is not related in terms of visual perception, but to what is referred to as 'Atomic Theory'. An explanation is offered by the protagonist, referred to as the 'Philosophical Inventor': it is possible, with enough momentum, to slip through the gaps between the molecules of any matter. In this model, the time traveller would be, by virtue of their speed, cutting through matter as if by some form of aerodynamics that was so efficient as to be undetectable. By this same logic, stopping carries the risk of disaster:

But pulling up is a different matter. There is where the danger comes in. Suppose yourself to stop while there is another body in the same space. Clearly all your atoms will be jammed in with unparalleled nearness to the atoms of the foreign body. Violent chemical reactions would ensue. There would be a tremendous explosion. Hades! How it would puzzle posterity! I thought of this as I was sailing away thousands of years ahead. I lost my nerve. I brought my machine round in a whirling curve and started back full pelt.³²⁵

That Wells's 1895 Time Traveller suffers no destructive accident in coming to a stop is through no effort or achievement on his part. His mastery of time travel is rudimentary, at least initially. When making the first journey into the future, his operation of the machine is so crude that his powers over time travel are pretty much limited to the invention of the machine. The experience is one over which he has

little control, and can do nothing to rectify the oversight of what might happen if he were to materialise within something or someone. In a fit of panic in the face of this risk, he stops suddenly and is flung into the air as the machine overturns. The consequences of this sudden stop reveal much about the nature of the journey and the apparatus of transportation. In making the panicked decision to end this unimaginably rapid progression through time so suddenly, the consequences suggest an analogy that is all too spatial. That his motion through time is analogous to that through space is likened to braking too rapidly on a fast moving bicycle. If not moving in space, then why should there be an experience of the kind of jolt that would be received from an excessively rapid braking that might throw the rider the saddle and overturn the bike behind them, or like riding a bike into an obstacle and being pitched headlong by the impact? Why should the physical effects of motion be so prevalent? Time travel is therefore a form of motion along a spatial trajectory, and relative changes in speed seem to carry some physical consequences, albeit minor when considering the velocity involved, albeit it to some extent virtual.³²⁶ So the time machine itself, and its motion through the years, exhibits some kind of genealogy that connects it significantly to the bicycle. The Time Traveller's accident, Stover points out, even bares a great deal of similarity to the comic accidents that populated the volume *The Humours of Cycling* (1897), a collection of stories, pictures and newspaper anecdotes that Wells contributed to.

The Time Traveller experiences difficulties with balance that are equivalent to the difficulties of learning to ride, which he gradually overcomes, gaining better control of the machine. The machine is equipped with what is specifically described as a saddle.³²⁷ (A reference made early on when the Time Traveller exhibits the miniature version of the time machine) As Leon Stover has pointed out,³²⁸ for Wells bicycles were indicative of a progressive development of locomotive technology that heralded the approach of motorization. From the late 1860s onwards, James Starley was responsible for the development and variation of improvement of the French 'Model' bicycle – which like cinema, provides a link between *The Time Machine* and the sprawling, international spread of technological modernity:

Those who remember reading the pungent letters of that date which appeared in an influential London daily paper from its Paris correspondent, will not forget the ridicule with which the new machine was assailed. It was made the ground upon which to charge the French people with having made a further concession towards the fantastic. However, the fact remained that the machine was popular, and was gradually becoming more so. One of the reasons of this, no doubt, was that it enabled anyone who had mastered it to do something which was not only novel, but which was considered decidedly clever – that of balancing one's self on a simple bar affixed to two wheels placed tandem fashioned, and not only enabling the rider to guide and propel the machine without touching the ground with his feet, but to go at a rate of speed more than double that which a pedestrian could accomplish in the same time.³²⁹

This early type was primitive in comparison with Starley's successive models. It had wheels made from hickory wood covered with an iron tyre, and handlebars that were nearly as high as the rider's chin. Metal spokes and rubber tyres were introduced, which together with Starley's mechanical improvements, made the bicycle a more popular form of transport. His many variations on its form included patents for the tricycle, the quadricycle, the Velocipede Chaggir Carriage, Starley's Invalid Chair and Rollerskates. These early bicycles and their associated forms offered *The Time Machine* an associative form that constituted something of a middle-class craze in the 1890s, one that was in Wells's view utopian in its technological promise.

The motion of time travel is indicated less clearly by some of the contradictory information available in the text. When viewed from the outside, there are suggestions that both the model and full size machine move before disappearing from sight. This is clearly indicated in the demonstration of the model time machine:

One of the candles on the mantel was blown out, and the little machine suddenly swung round, became indistinct, was seen as a ghost for a second

perhaps, as an eddy of faintly glittering brass and ivory; and it was gone – vanished! Save for the lamp the table was bare.³³⁰

From the outside, the model is seen to move, although it is unclear whether this movement persists, contributing to the indistinct visual effect through spinning, or if it is merely an initial movement before the machine leaves three dimensional space. There is no account of the Time Traveller spinning, and his cinematic descriptions imply a fixed perspective. It is possible, but not disclosed, that the full scale machine makes such a turn as a singular motion before dematerialising. It has also been assumed that when travelling, the machine will be fixed to the earth somehow, as if the effect of gravity is sustained throughout the journey. It is made clear that the machine does not change its spatial position, only its temporal location. By following this logic, it seems likely, unless anchored to the spot, that the Time Traveller would rematerialise floating in space, as the Earth would have moved in its trajectory through the Solar System. An additional detail, albeit minor, is the failure to take into account of any change in the level of the ground underneath the machine. The Time Traveller's violent entry into the future is caused by his rapid halt, not by any discrepancy between the height of the floor of his workshop and the ground on which he arrives. His return journey finds him appearing gently on the floor of his workshop.

These details are somewhat inconsistent with Wells's meticulous attempts to ground the fantastic narrative within a framework of convincing everyday materiality. However, they do hint at a particular narrative relating to interior and exterior, reinforcing a peculiar sense that the Time Traveller never actually leaves his domestic workshop. In the novel, distinctions between interior and exterior are severely eroded, providing a unifying device with which to consider a speculative notion of material culture. This is to be the subject matter of the next chapter, so for the present serves merely to illustrate a quality of movement through time. Through making it clear that the machine is not moving in three dimensional space, and therefore never really leaving the space of the Time Traveller's laboratory, its trajectory is ultimately but inconsistently defined.

I would like to suggest that a significant way of thinking about time in the universe of *The Time Machine* is that offered by the world view of proto-forms of anthropology as they existed in the nineteenth century. The cultures that spanned the globe represented different moments along a forward moving trajectory that culminated in the present. Those cultures that were distinct from Europe and those populations consisting of its recent emigrants constituted what was thought of as a window into the past, simultaneously manifested within the present moment. Small-scale cultures that did not rely on the processes, structures and materials of industrial modernity constituted earlier points on the trajectory of evolutionary time. They were the living subjects of archaeology.

The role of material culture as a loose disciplinary category was to determine and judge the various degrees of sophistication that a particular non-Western culture might have attained. A virtual scale of evolution could thus be envisioned, that placed European and Victorian society at the top, as the most advanced. Societies outside of this category were marked according to a descent that marked their relative position along a scheme of temporal progression. At the bottom of this scale were cultures that were categorised as hunter-gatherer groups, whose social and technological evolution was seen as corresponding directly to that of stone age humanity. As Victor Buchli points out, such a rationalised conflation of space and time in the form of an evolutionary schema to account for cultural difference served specific purposes:

This naturally justified European dominance in expansionist imperial affairs, but also served liberal notions of Enlightenment thought which advocated the universality of human experience and justice.³³¹

The scale of differentiation, when confirmed by an evolutionary sequence, could be read as confirmation that despite the degree of 'civilisation', all peoples of the world were subject to the same social and technical processes. Once this scale attained its

status as proof, then all of the activities and institutions encompassed by humanity as a whole were connected and therefore unassailable as indicators of progress.

The irrefutability of this evolutionary temporality as a form of evidence was such that Edward Tylor observed its value not only in thinking of history, 'but as even laying down the first stages of curves of movements which will describe and affect the courses of future opinions and institutions'.³³² So not only does the disciplinary study of material culture provide a key to constituting the past, it might also be drawn upon to extrapolate upon the future, which is precisely what Wells's has either attempted, or perhaps knowingly exploited, in the material world that is *The Time Machine*. This overall scheme was articulated in detail by the influential American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan in his work *Ancient Society* (1887), in which he laid out the progressive changes that spanned the most ancient and therefore primitive to the cultures of civilised modernity. It posited a universality of responses to given limitations, allowing the whole of humanity to be incorporated within the temporal and spatial curve of progress. His direct experience had demonstrated the disappearance of the cultural specificity and uniqueness of Native American peoples in the face of devastating European expansion, and cited isolation as the principle that allowed certain cultures to remain in a state that so much resembled the earliest forms of human. The role of material culture was to allow readings of all other forms of social form and structure within the scale of progress. No matter who or where the social structure may be encountered, people could be understood by the relative qualities of the societies as material worlds.

Other manifestations of this evolutionary structure of time could be read as deeply encoded forms. Such forms are particularly visible within Victorian culture, which has left much in the form of a legacy of fossilised remains of this model of material culture and evolutionary temporality. For example, it can be seen in the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens. Completed in 1876 and instigated by an overwhelming swell of demand for an appropriately fitting and permanent tribute to the Prince Consort who died in December 1861. George Gilbert Scott's response to the criteria of the commission was radical in its form, favouring Gothic Revival over the predominant tendencies for a neo-classical structure:

The idea which I have worked out may be described as a colossal statue of the Prince, placed beneath a vast and magnificent shrine or tabernacle, and surrounded by works of sculpture illustrating those arts and sciences which he fostered... From the upper platform rises a Podium or continuous pedestal, surrounded by sculptures in alto-relievo, representing historical groups or series of the most eminent artists of all ages of the world: the four sides being devoted severally to Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Poetry and Music.... Besides the sculpture already described as surrounding the Podium, there are on pedestals projecting from each of its angles, groups illustrating the industrial arts of Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, and Engineering. Above these, against the pillars, and also in the angles of the gables, are statues which represent the greater sciences, and in the tabernacle-work of the spire are figures of angels and of the Christian virtues.³³³

In addition to these sculptural representations are a group of sculptures that are perhaps more prominent when walking around the Memorial than the golden figure of Albert. They depict race and nationality in terms defined, without ambiguity, by Imperial Britain. Each pedestal represents one of four groups 'allegorically relating to the four quarters of the globe and their productions: thus referring indirectly to the International Exhibition of 1851'.³³⁴ This was an intended representational form referring to an earlier form of representation, specifically that of the Great Exhibition as a means of Victoria's nation defining the world in relation to itself, while simultaneously transforming that world.

The group representing Asia, by the sculptor John Henry Foley, is described as follows:

In this group the central figure alone is a female. She is seated on an elephant, and the action of removing her veil is an allusion to the important

display of the products of Asia, which was made at the Great Exhibition of 1851.³³⁵

While ultimately the glorified subject of the memorial personified by the achievements of an individual, deified as a golden giant, Scott's gothic fantasy pays equal attention to the codifying of the glory of a sequentially constructed civilisation. The artists of all ages of the world depicts a simultaneous history of classical antiquity, the Renaissance and Early Modernity, while the continents of the world are allegorically represented in relation to the epitome of Victorian society as its god-like apex. While this structure is discussed here with specific reference to the construction of time, the analysis of such an object for the speculation of historical allegories is useful in referring to the structures of the Sphinx and the Palace of Green Porcelain in landscape of 802,701, which will be further addressed both later in this chapter and in the following one.

A more explicit realisation of this underlying view of an evolutionary temporality that stretched across the globe can be found in the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. The Museum's founder, Lieutenant-General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, embarked upon a project to not only map but demonstrate an evolutionary scheme of time, simultaneously articulated across space, through the collection and display of objects. Early in his military career, Pitt Rivers was given the task of investigating methods that could potentially improve the type of rifle used in the British Army, its use and the methods of instruction employed. In seeking to determine qualities of improvement in weaponry, he speculated that this was effected by means gradual changes, 'arrived at as a cumulative result of slight modifications'.³³⁶ Asserting the regularity of this process, he believed it to be a universal rule of evolution that applied to other ideas and objects and it was in order to test and illustrate these views that he began, in 1851, to collect systematically. The date of 1851 is no coincidence, as the Great Exhibition was certainly a most formative influence on his desire to collect and the importance of a grand, instructive sequence of display.

His system of classification comprised of groups into which objects of like form or function were associated to form a series, introducing the term *typology* to describe his method. Within these main groups objects belonging to the same region could then form local sub-groups. Where objects could be utilized to do so, they would be arranged so as to suggest a sequence that suggested the possible evolution of the particular class. This type of arrangement was particularly applied to objects from the same region, as this was thought to be more illustrative of a sequential continuity. This sequence was envisioned as one that moved from the most *primitive*³³⁷ to the most complex and specialized, the primitive end of the scale in closest proximity to natural forms. He allegorized typology as a tree of progress that distinguishes the leading shoots from the inner branches and believed that this method was itself the evidential key to understanding human culture. Typology is a making solid of temporality, as well as a construction of a sense of time itself. It is both a system for illustrating a process of change over duration, as well as a constitutive invention of how duration might be conceptualised. The invention is of a form of disciplinary analysis that must necessarily construct its own subject.

The system devised by Pitt Rivers is the most ambitious of museological attempts to visualise the general form of evolutionary temporality. As a form that was both simultaneous, in the various stages represented by different cultures, and linear in its overall trajectory, typology can be seen as a subtle and systematic formal response. Pitt Rivers made a most ambitious attempt to illustrate the suggestion of this temporal flow that cut across space, in a manner that involved the recreation of a uni-dimensional object.

At the time his typological collection began, the anthropological discipline was still in an embryonic state. Social phenomena had been identified as a subject of study by Saint-Simon in France, and the subject of *sociology* had been named in the nineteenth century by Auguste Comte, whose laws of social life were based on the assumption that all societies evolved through the same stages and that a drive towards improvement was a fundamental principle, a belief that was recognized in Pitt Rivers' system:

It was a fundamental principle of Colonel Lane Fox that in the arts and customs of the still living *savage* and *barbaric*³³⁸ peoples there are reflected to a considerable extent the various strata of human culture in the past, and that it is possible to reconstruct in some degree the life and industries of Man in prehistoric times by a study of existing races in corresponding stages of civilization.³³⁹

Nineteenth-century thought in this area was characterized by an evolutionism largely influenced, in Britain, by Herbert Spencer, whose ideas about the survival of the fittest were later attributed to Darwin. Pitt Rivers' notion of evolution, that was only solidified by the interpretations that followed the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859, is a model that privileges his present moment of Western civilization. In particular, it is Britain as the core of Empire that is posited as the inevitable conclusion of successive progression, rendering other cultures as different stages of primitive, inferior development:

The Earth, as we know, is peopled with races of the most heterogeneous description, races in all stages of culture. Colonel Lane Fox argued that, making due allowance for possible instances of degradation from a higher condition, this heterogeneity could readily be explained by assuming that, while the progress of some races has received relatively little check, the cultural development of other races has been retarded to a greater or less extent, and that we may see represented conditions of at least partially arrested development. In other words, he considered that in the various manifestations of culture among the less civilized peoples were to be seen more or less direct *survivals* from the earlier stages or strata of human evolution; vestiges of ancient conditions which have fallen out at different points and have been left behind in the general march of progress.³⁴⁰

For Pitt Rivers the central point in his thinking about the development of material culture was analogous to the evolution of natural forms described by Darwin, and his

ideas really only took form after reading the book in 1859. However, there was no such convincing analogy there for Darwin, who rejected the idea that the idea of adaptation was bound to the notion of progress.³⁴¹ There is an apparent scientific, objective quality to evolution, as Darwin attempted to outline, but this is lost in the idea of social evolution.³⁴²

Pitt Rivers' typographic system was dependent on very specific modes of display in order to best demonstrate his theories of evolutionary progress. Inherent in this was the close proximity of archaeological and ethnological material. It is clear that for Pitt Rivers, objects defined by these two disciplines possessed a degree of inter-changeability:

Following the orthodox scientific principle of reasoning from the known to the unknown, I have commenced my descriptive catalogue with the specimens of the arts of existing savages, and have employed them, as far as possible, to illustrate the relics of *primaeval* men, none of which, except those constructed of the more imperishable materials, such as flint and stone, have survived to our time. All the implements of *primaeval* man that were of decomposable materials have disappeared, and can be replaced only in imagination by studying those of his neatest congener, the modern savage.³⁴³

In this schema, ethnological artefacts can stand in as substitutes for objects from the distant past that have not survived. The so-called primitive societies are literally representative of prehistoric stages of humanity's development, therefore, objects from these societies can be fitted comfortably among objects from geographically and historically distant locations. The material civilization, if the world of 802,701 could be described as such, encountered by the Time Traveller, is one that enacts this virtual temporal distance in the most literal of ways.

The prominently central presence of the Palace of Green Porcelain in the novel is no accident in relation to the tendencies mapped out here. Shortly after entering the vast building, The Time Traveller declares the Palace to be in fact a museum: "Clearly we stood among the ruins of some latter-day South

Kensington!³⁴⁴ This is a monument, it seems, to the nineteenth century, carried out in some far-distant age that still precedes the age of Eloi. As a super-museum, it represents a culmination of civilization on such a temporal scale, as well as the site for its organization and interpretation. More than this it signifies without ambiguity the distant moment of such an apex. Progress is long over. All that remains are decaying ruins. The image is one not of the height of Empire and Victorian culture, but its distant and fantastical futurity, as a failed civilisation, long since vanished. While this civilisation may have come to an end, there remain material traces upon which to gaze and reflect. The Time Traveller's encounter with the Palace of Green Porcelain as a ruin of a future version of his own time strikes a resonant cord with a visual image that predates the novel by more than twenty years. The image is an engraving by Gustave Doré, the final plate in *London: A Pilgrimage* (1872), written by Blanchard Jerrold and illustrated by Doré. While, as Linda Nead argues, the book maps London as a social form in the 1870s, creating 'a geography of contrasts through its scenes of high life and low life',³⁴⁵ this final image is not of contemporary London, but a fantasy of its future.

This is still an image of a familiar London, as it then appeared, but as a ruin, as if the catastrophe were very recent. This is in contrast to the symbolic embodiment of the present in an exaggerated and grander form, as is the case with the Palace of Green Porcelain. *London: A Pilgrimage* ends with a fantasy image of London's future, in which a traveller from New Zealand sits by the now rocky banks of the Thames, looking upriver towards St Paul's Cathedral. Nead suggests that the text that describes the scene is perhaps a formulaic nod to conventional tropes of imperial history, but that it has been transformed into a dramatic and striking conclusion by Doré:

It is a dark image, even by the standards of Doré's distinctive style of ruled engraving, with its dense blacks and dark greys. (...) The buildings are strangely compacted within the vertical frame of the picture and recall both the ruins of imperial Rome and a more apocalyptic vision of the end of civilisation. The shattered dome of St Paul's and surrounding desolation

might be the consequence of inertia and slow decline, or the result of a sudden and terrible disaster. Victorian Babylon lies at some indeterminate time in the future, wrecked and shattered, under a heavy, foreboding sky.³⁴⁶

The image is one that suggests a way of understanding London as it was in the 1870s, as a site, Nead suggests, of diversity and urgency. Modernity's contradictory impulses find resolution in this image of ruin. Nead also argues that this image is one that was not without a context of familiarity - a context that was constituted in two distinct ways. The first is the familiar literary trope, relating to the genealogy of empires and writings on myth and political history.

The other constitutive form of context in which Doré's image might be situated is one that is more significant, as it reflects to a greater extent the complex temporalities of the Palace of Green Porcelain and *The Time Machine* in general:

The Metropolitan Board of Works and the railway companies were re-making London: widening and straightening, levelling and tunnelling, and the image of ruin had become part of the visual vocabulary of the historical present. The ruins of London were not just a rhetorical figure for the cyclical evolution of empires, but were a feature of the everyday experience of the modern metropolis.³⁴⁷

The vision of ruined future London is therefore something of a reconfigured collage of the moment in which it appeared. The ruin functions as a distillation of essential qualities drawn out of the contemporary scene it is trying to represent. While operating in a different manner, I would like to suggest a firm correlation between this visual operation and the textual manifestation of *The Palace of Green Porcelain*. The ruin in Doré's image serves to argue, according to Nead, that modernity itself is built upon an image of ruin. Modernity, in Wells's future world, has built into it the seeds of its own destruction. It is a condition, as Carlyle expounds, that must address its own riddle of the Sphinx, or face destruction.

Wells's ruin is distinct from Doré's. While the latter's is a ruin based on contemporary London's transformative and technological condition and its resemblance to a ruin, the Palace of Green Porcelain is an embodiment of a distinct form of modernity as a museological form. It is a form constituted with some very specifically constructed elements. The Time Traveller's citing of South Kensington is an unambiguous reference to what is now known as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The South Kensington Museum opened in 1881, just two years before Wells started at the Normal School of Science, which was just across the road where Imperial College is today. The Museum grew out of the aftermath of the Great Exhibition, held in nearby Hyde Park. The whole geographic area of South Kensington became known as Albertopolis, in acknowledgement of the legacy of the Exhibition and his primacy of place within its conception and execution. It is this aspect that the giant golden statue of Albert looks out over from the throne of his memorial. However, the growth of institutions in this area was as much do to anxiety brought about by a lack of favourable comparison in the international show, as it was by any notions of progressive optimism. A general but dire shortcoming was identified by holding Britain's material culture up to that of the rest of the world as it was represented. The South Kensington Museum was a concrete manifestation of the need to respond to this. The Museum at South Kensington, and the disciplinary order it embodied and articulated, was an integral part of Wells's education at the Normal School of Science. As Parrinder says of Wells's student time:

At South Kensington, Wells studied the 'science of life' on the dissecting table and under the microscope. His statement that he 'had man definitely placed in the great scheme of space and time' suggests an organisation of dead forms like that of a museum – a 'Universal Rigid' spread out for inspection. 'Natural selection', he later wrote, 'is selection by Death'.³⁴⁸

Evolution itself is conflated with museological tendencies to naturalise the equal privileging of the two as suggestive of a near-ontological simultaneity and an elemental character, rather than as something historical and institutional. Nature is

already like a museum, not something invented by the museum. The museum is generated by this objective tendency that precedes it.

The Palace of Green Porcelain first seen in the far distance, and is later sought by the Time Traveller as a refuge in which he hopes that he and Weena will find a haven inaccessible to the Morlocks. It is one of several buildings explored by the Time Traveller and described as 'palaces', due to their overblown scale. All of these buildings are described as 'living palaces', and seem to be filled only with dining halls and sleeping chambers. The museological status of the Palace of Green Porcelain comes as a great surprise to the Time Traveller, but is actually signposted from the outset of its appearance. The descriptive name given to this building by the Time Traveller is in reference to the Crystal Palace, which after the Great Exhibition of 1851, was rebuilt in a larger configuration in Sydenham, South London. Like the Palace of Green Porcelain, it was also a form of super-museum that played out history as a vast but mappable evolutionary structure.³⁴⁹ Upon first seeing the Palace of Green Porcelain, it is made clear that this is unlike any other structure that the Time Traveller has encountered in the future:

It was larger than the largest of the palaces or ruins I knew, and the façade had an Oriental look: the face of it having the lustre, as well as the pale-green tint, a kind of bluish green, of a certain type of Chinese porcelain. This difference in aspect suggested a difference in use(.)³⁵⁰

The image is one that fits well with what the view would have been like of the Crystal Palace as it stood on Sydenham Hill.

The temporality suggested by the presence of the Palace of Green Porcelain, and its status as, in part at any rate, a fantasised version of the Crystal Palace, is not straightforward. Perhaps the most vocal, and sustained, critic of the Crystal Palace's life span from its initial construction, to its permanent relocation, was John Ruskin. If Carlyle's arguments as they are unambiguously presented within *The Time Machine* can be summarised as the 'Riddle of the Sphinx', then I would like to suggest that Ruskin may also be introduced, albeit more speculatively, under the

general banner of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849). The focus of Ruskin's ideas will be specifically related to temporality and the Palace of Green Porcelain, through Ruskin's disdain for the Crystal Palace, which was in fact neither made from crystal, nor indeed a palace. As M. Christine Boyer suggests, Ruskin sought to demonstrate not only architecture's ability to express meaning and morality, but that it could be utilised as a constructive form to ensure social stability in the face of a modernity's developmental momentum: 'Architecture, for Ruskin, was not an issue of aesthetics but one of moral reform'.³⁵¹ His work, as read here through Boyer, owed much to that of Carlyle, whose writings he reread and assimilated into his mode of thought. Drawing on a comparative approach between modernity and a fantasised medieval past, Ruskin, through the lens of Carlyle, sought to draw distinct combinations of past and present to highlight an urgent need of reform in the face of fragmentation and a dangerous lack of social cohesion. This perspective is reflected and inverted in the discourse of *The Time Machine*, looking to the future to articulate the apparent dangers and anxieties of the present.

The Crystal Palace became a central motif in Ruskin's comparative method, 'a metonym representing the dementia of his age'.³⁵² It was an alienated form, one cut off from his idealised synthesis of categories, that would bring together art and nature, labour and design, as well as function and beauty. Perhaps more significant is what Ruskin saw as the blankness of the Crystal Palace. This blankness was due partially to Ruskin's idea that it was impossible to determine any sense of natural beauty or ornamentation in the repetitive iron and glass elements that through sheer seriality made up the vast building. But the blankness was also a historical one, detached from time, history and memory:

This monumental building in glass, or so Ruskin believed, killed the ability of architecture to speak to the emotions or memory of an observer. (...) To the contrary, Ruskin professed that it was the duty of noble architecture to speak precisely, to act as if it were a book of history and express its story so very well.³⁵³

The muteness of the Crystal Palace therefore was a temporal silence as well, one that failed to announce its connection to history. The Palace of Green Porcelain is similarly mute, revealing little of historical value as an enormous and silent ruin. It represents a complete detachment from history and memory, in a manner analogous to Ruskin's disdain for the Crystal Palace: 'its novelty erased all the monuments of the past, enabling a new people to arise without a record or trace of their history'.³⁵⁴ Boyer's reading sounds uncannily like a description of the Palace of Green Porcelain and its symbolic status as an artefact relating to history, memory and continuity in the Eloi world. The distant view of the Palace of Green Porcelain, as seen by the Time Traveller, also brings to mind the visual obstruction that the Crystal Palace provided for Ruskin when relocated to Sydenham, near Ruskin's home in Herne Hill, South London. While literally blocking his view, Ruskin complained that the obstruction could be sustained metaphorically so that it might be said to block his ability to think about architectural history. The Crystal Palace obstructed the very shadow of the past upon the present. In medieval architecture, 'Ruskin could read in the stones and textural details of a nation's buildings the strengths and weaknesses of its soul and spirit'.³⁵⁵ Yet this was an embodiment of Victorian modernity, and by the eighteen nineties, a deeply historicised one.

Ruskin's despair with the form of the Crystal Palace seems not only based upon his inability to see beyond it to the architecture of the past, but also an inability to look through its glass walls, which he saw as horrifically opaque, upon its contents. A star exhibit of the Great Exhibition in 1851, that was subsequently given a prominent role in the rebuilt Crystal Palace, was Augustus Welby Pugin's Mediaeval Court. Its gothic form was no less than an articulation of that very connection with the past that Ruskin deemed necessary. In its first incarnation, the Crystal Palace was a hyper-modern structure that housed within itself a set of continuities through the presence of gothic discourses in architecture and design. Specifically, these tendencies were characterised by the term Gothic Revival, which has already been introduced in this chapter in the discussion of Scott's Albert Memorial as a Victorian fantasy of temporal continuity. Gothic Revival was a set of ideas that looked to a medieval past, but unlike the historicist reiterations of popular

forms of classical and Renaissance style Gothic Revival was a tradition of modernity which constructed a past and a set of traditions for itself. Charles Barry's New Palace of Westminster (1837-67) had established Gothic Revival in Britain as a prominent form of the architectural languages of government, one based on a constructed historical trajectory. Through the established continuity of an order of legitimate authority, specifically relating to an idealised version of the medieval and the continuation of a tradition of gothic, architectural form could be made to read as an embodiment of patriotic national values relating to religion, learning, law and freedom. Replacing the parliament building which had been destroyed by fire in 1834, the new palace was a demonstration of the ability to use gothic to remake the past itself by remaking its buildings. The decoration of the new Palace of Westminster was overseen by Pugin, who in the 1830s crystalised the symbolic power and urgency latent in Gothic Revival architecture. He advocated the conflation of structure and symbolic function, which he believed was inherent in medieval architecture: 'A pinnacle, to take one example, is both 'mystical and natural', its verticality making it 'an emblem of the Resurrection', while it is simultaneously 'an upper weathering, to throw off the rain'.³⁵⁶

However, the place of Gothic Revival was not unconstested, and at the time of the Scott's monument proposal, there were few prevalent examples of recent gothic buildings in Britain. Scott himself was pressured into abandoning his gothic design for the Foreign Office in Whitehall (1856-9), which he substituted for a Renaissance style scheme. His plan for Albert's monument, however, would see no such compromise. Scott's design for the monument had an odd quality of modernity about it. It was a recently revived form in European architecture, yet takes as its precedent medieval forms.³⁵⁷ There was another particular quality to the shrine that Scott favoured. He described these shrines as:

...imaginary buildings, such as had never in reality been erected; and my idea was to realise one of these imaginary structures with its precious metals, its inlaying, its enamels, etc., etc. This was an idea so new, as to provoke much opposition.³⁵⁸

That Scott took as his precedent for his structures a form of architecture that was ancient, yet suggestive of a previously unrealised fantasy, signifies something other than a reductive historicism in their conception. To translate these fairy-like forms into actuality was to aim for a type of building that had never existed before. The use of a style of building that did not necessarily exist is echoed by the present form of the Memorial, restored to a condition that never existed prior to restoration.³⁵⁹ There is a strange quality of modernity in this strategy, particularly in relation to an opposition to Renaissance models. Gothic provided a resistance to an established tradition of language and reference in architectural practice. Chris Brooks has pointed out, with reference to the construction of gothic as a fantasised medieval source, that 'modernity could only create itself by also creating a past from which the present was different'.³⁶⁰ Yet any sense of modernity was also based on ideas relating to construction itself. Of paramount importance to Scott's interest in medieval architecture was that it offered lessons in building, especially in relation to an integrity towards the architectural elements that it included. Gothic was a system of architecture for Scott, one that could be applied with a degree of flexibility and invention, a system that could absorb new materials and innovative practices without risk to its integrity or authority. His design for the Midland Grand Hotel (1868-77) at St Pancras Station is a magnificently stylish fusion of the most up to date iron construction technologies with thirteenth-century French gothic. Scott's interests were also consistent with the Gothic ideal of a collaborative approach to making buildings, not only between architect and sculptor, but towards a broad range of craft skills and traditions. For Scott, the inclusion of engineers into the field of collaboration was also a desired necessity.

For the Crystal Palace, from the point of its inauguration, to contain within it as content much material that could be characterised as Gothic Revival, suggests a situation far more complex than Ruskin is able to read into its looming presence. Its radical newness is simultaneously a model of continuous and evolutionary history. The Palace of Green Porcelain is its unambiguously rendered successor in the distant future, now abandoned as a decaying ruin. Its green surface, described as so different

from the material surfaces of every other building encountered by the Time Traveller, is suggestive of the radical alterity of the Crystal Palace in its architectural context, clearly alien to all other buildings in both scale and facture. That the Crystal Palace occupies a formative place in Wells's make up is revealed by a reference in his autobiography. It appears as a site of influence on the childish but formative dawning of his sexuality:

(...) in the *Autobiography* Wells attributes his childish sexual awakening to his 'naïve, direct admiration for the lovely bodies, as they seemed, of those political divinities of Tenniel's in *Punch*, and ... the plaster casts of Greek statuary that adorned the Crystal Palace.³⁶¹

A new temporal dimension is added to the presence of the Crystal Palace, as a nostalgically rendered site of the author's own embodied subjectivity. Yet the most specific character of the Crystal Palace as a structure of temporality is to be found in its content after the Great Exhibition, as a form of originary but ecstatically distorted museum. I would like to suggest that the Crystal Palace is rendered without ambiguity as a material and historical form within the text of *The Time Machine*.

At the beginning of the 21st Century, prior to the hotly contested redevelopment of the site, it is still possible to walk along the decaying terraces of Crystal Palace Park, which once served as a dramatic foreground for the building, but now stand as ruins. A handful of statues are visible, situated amongst the extensive but structurally unsound balustrades. Their form, makers and subjects have fallen into obscurity. These statues are fossilised clues to the dreamworld that was the Crystal Palace, yet it is their advanced state of decay that is the most suggestive. At first glance, they resemble an idealised image of classical ruins. However, on closer inspection of the eroded surfaces, it becomes clear that this is concrete, reinforced with rusted metal rods – an adaptation of the Roman invention of concrete as an industrial technology. Most of the figures have cracked to the extent that they have open chasms, revealing that they are totally hollow. These ruins appear to be some obscure historical footnote, a melancholic suburban anomaly soon

to be effaced by the ongoing transformation of the city's geography. They do not convey the scale and impact of the Crystal Palace, or the influence that this dreamworld has had on either our contemporary psychic and material environment, or that of Wells in the 1890s.

Originally built to house the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, the Crystal Palace was dismantled after the close of the show, relocated, significantly enlarged in a new configuration and set within a specifically landscaped park in Sydenham, South London. It opened to the public in June 1854 and remained open until it was destroyed by fire on the night of 30 November 1936. Today, the only objects to survive intact, and in fact have recently been subject to restoration, are a series of sculptural representations of various prehistoric creatures that inhabit an archipelago of miniature islands, ancestrally distant forms of both contemporary palaeontological and popular images of such. It is difficult to imagine a sense of the contemporary without the depth of the past that our culture now describes, to imagine all of time to have been within the scale of the existence of culturally developed humans. Yet this sense of temporal depth is a factor developed only in the period of early modernity. The 'discovery' of non-biblical time – a chronology distinct from that set out in the Bible – was analogous to the 'invention' of history, and the two were brought together in a spectacular form before a mass audience at Sydenham in a way that is still detectable thanks to the dinosaurs that survive amongst the ruins.

A key factor in the formation of modernity's discourse on time is the fossil. Their importance is central to the development of a methodology for reconstructing history, particularly in the assessing of the relative ages of rocks. In early geology, fossils satisfied the need for geologists to have a criterion of history, identifiable references that opened up new routes of discursive navigation. This type of historicism, based on observation and a scientifically methodical practice, can be read as possessing a critical impulse, as it was a means of dispelling both misconception and mythic – religious – dogma. Susan Buck-Morss has identified this kind of mythic historicism as dominated by Social Darwinism, which was a target for critique in Walter Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk*, or *Arcades Project*. This

unfinished work was to be an attempt to re-read the obsolete shopping arcades of Paris as phenomenally accessible sites of critical reflection. By presenting the relics from an earlier order of capitalism, Benjamin sought to disrupt the mythic form of capitalism, as a form of progress, exemplified by evolutionary Social Darwinism:

Originally, Darwin's theory had a critical impulse (....) But within Social Darwinism, that critical impulse was lost. The idea of social 'evolution' in effect glorified the blind, empirical course of human history.³⁶²

The idea of the fossil is therefore one with an inherent critical potential within the context of its historical interpretation. For Benjamin, industrial objects from previous eras were viewed as fossils, 'as the trace of living history that can be read from the surfaces of the surviving objects'.³⁶³ The Crystal Palace Dinosaurs can be read in these terms as fossils, as the surviving objects of another epoch, which, as images of extinct, evolutionarily obsolete phenomena, could only exist as mediated representational forms. The origins of the obsolete dinosaurs of the Crystal Palace and the gap between them and those of *Jurassic Park* serve as narrative history that suggests the potential to bring the mediated representations of prehistoric life to speech as models of culture.

For Wells, the dinosaurs of the Crystal Palace were already obsolete. He occupies a point, as author of *The Time Machine*, within this gap. Their configuration having been long since modified by research since the mid 1850s, these recreations of pre-history were already fossils. But palaeontology still, it could be argued, possessed a radical status in its depiction of deep temporality, and the fossil, perhaps, was just as radical a tool for Wells as it was for Benjamin. The Palace of Green Porcelain itself is the ultimate fossil encountered by the Time Traveller, made explicit by his initial entrance to the building and the first impressions gained of the Palace as a museum:

Here, apparently, was the Palaeontological Section, and a very splendid array of fossils it must have been, through the inevitable process of decay that had

been staved off for a time, and had, through the extinction of bacteria and fungi, lost ninety-nine hundredths of its force, was, nevertheless, with extreme sureness if with extreme slowness at work again upon all its treasures. Here and there I found traces of the little people in the shape of rare fossils broken to pieces or threaded in strings upon reeds. And the cases had in some instances been bodily removed - by the Morlocks as I judged.³⁶⁴

The fossils present extinct forms, earlier orders that have long since disappeared. This, of course, is the fate of human civilization itself in this far-off future. Yet as well as offering a dire warning, the fossil can also be read as the means of reading, with a critical impulse, the structures of history. In this case, however, it seems as if hysterical polemics have dominated the kind of rupture of myth suggested by Benjamin's reading of industrial fossils.

The relation between this museological department and the notion of the fossil is two-fold. It is literally comprised of the fossilised bones of long extinct animals. In addition, however, the very technologies of display that transform these indexical remains into a discursive structure of history and display have also attained the condition of fossils. The gallery and its contents have been subject to processes of decay and transformation. The Time Traveller describes, as working with extreme slowness, evidence of the natural ravages of time having destroyed most of the exhibits. The collection is thus exposed to the same register of temporal process that the artefacts themselves had previously been. Yet there has been another order of destructive intervention, detectable through inscription upon the scene, as traces upon the surface of a fossil. Both the Eloi and Morlocks receive blame for depleting the collection. It is further evidence of the decadent stupidity of one race, and the wanton barbarism of the other. The Morlocks are accused of having 'bodily removed' entire cases, for some unknown purpose. The Eloi, being beyond actual purpose, are merely charged with mindless and accidental damage, making jewellery from fragments of the collection. Not only are they ignorant of the knowledge within the Palace of Green Porcelain, both races have actively contributed to the destruction of history in the future.

By the 1890s, the kinds of gallery which the Time Traveller finds as a ruin were well established sites of educative spectacle. The Palace of Green Porcelain retains this sense of pedagogical narrative through visual and spatial articulation. Wells's super-museum is the climatic pinnacle of such enterprises, as described by Parrinder:

His Palace of Green Porcelain in *The Time Machine* is an imaginary museum containing the story of human culture, science and technology as well as the whole of earth history; and it is also the last of all museums, marking humanity's forthcoming extinction.³⁶⁵

Parrinder suggests that the exotic fascination conjured by dinosaurs plays a specific role in their representation of a dethroned order. By representing dinosaurs as extinct forms, they are precursors to the empire of human mastery, embodied by the order of the museum. Wells's Palace, however, situates such self-assured dominance within the same realm of obsolete order, of extinct and failed empire:

Wells was not the only nineteenth-century writer to respond to the fascination of these museums. Jules Verne's Captain Nemo has his own museum aboard the submarine *Nautilus*, while Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, with its exhaustive discussions of the whale and cetological science, itself resembles nothing so much as a vast museum. Melville's explanation that 'To produce a mighty book, you must choose a mighty theme' may also explain why the great, exotic animals such as whales and dinosaur contribute so powerfully to the appeal of natural history museums. They represent alternatives to human mastery which, however, have been dethroned.³⁶⁶

While Parrinder situates natural history museums within a Wellsian context as centres of propaganda for evolutionary theory, this perspective fails to take into account the role of the Crystal Palace as just such a site for the construction and dissemination of evolutionary ideology. Therefore it is necessary to expand further

upon the Crystal Palace in its life after the Great Exhibition in order to further constitute the temporal nature of the Palace of Green Porcelain in *The Time Machine*. However, before doing so, it is necessary to reflect upon Parrinder's conflation of South Kensington with the discourse of evolution.

If, as Foucault maintains, every science invents the object of its study, then the dinosaur was, arguably, invented by Richard Owen in 1841. Owen was a comparative anatomist, the chairman of a panel of judges in the Great Exhibition and was later instrumental in the founding of what was initially an extension of the British Museum, but was later to become the Natural History Museum, in South Kensington. He is considered, after Darwin, as one of the most important figures in the foundation of Victorian natural history as well as the leader of the nineteenth-century museum movement. In 1841, he announced to the scientific community in London that recently discovered fossil teeth belonged to a new group of extinct creatures, which he named 'dinosaurs', or terrible lizards. Owen has been accused of championing the prehistoric and inventing the dinosaur as a means of emphasising the fact that these fossilised skeletons were distinguishable from any other animal ever known. This emphasis would, for him, have reinforced his opposition to the principle of evolution. Although Darwin would not publish his *Origin of Species* until 1859 (even though he had finished the text many years previously), arguments for and against concepts of evolution within natural history had been developing through the early nineteenth century.

Owen's opposition to evolutionary theories can be seen in the decorative animals that populate the façade of the Alfred Waterhouse's building that houses the Natural History Museum. The apparently random mixture of contemporary, prehistoric and mythic creatures is a deliberately provocative attempt to disavow any notion of an evolutionary progress of animals, as it shows a class of reptiles that appears to be higher than lizards and crocodiles but which are all extinct, therefore seemingly undermining a simplistic reading of evolution. This opposition appears absurd today as coming from the man who invented the dinosaur, which is a subject that is particularly evocative of concepts of temporal and biological evolution. Yet for him, it was intended to represent a dead end, a line that did not progress as an

example to dismiss the notion of a changing temporality. It seems as if he favoured a continuous but staggered theory of creation, in which God introduced successive species in different eras, then wiped them out, or allowed them to die. Since the notion of a great flood had been dismissed by recent geological advances as the cause of their extinction, he speculated that changes in carbon dioxide levels in the air were to blame – a rationale that although flawed could have some appeal in a polluted industrial city such as Victorian London. Despite the complicated variations in the evolutionary discourses which give structure to the Palace of Green Porcelain, the ambiguities rendered by Owen's resistance to Darwin's teleological threat does little to stifle the evolutionary nature of Wells's Palace in the light of that of Sydenham.

The Great Exhibition of the Works and Industry of all Nations (1 May-15 October 1851) was the first international exhibition and the largest public visual spectacle then to be staged, based on an international trade and production competition leading to an unprecedented display which I would argue helped forge our understanding of the concepts of display, spectacle, surveillance and commodity. This helped to determine the form of the modern museum and gallery as well as spaces of commerce, denying any possibility of conceptually separating these sites. The building in which the exhibition was housed, which had acquired the Crystal Palace as an unofficial but appropriate name, (from the satirical magazine *Punch*) was to be dismantled according to the original terms of the exhibition in order to restore Hyde Park to something approximating its original state. Joseph Paxton, the building's architect, formed a company that was able to purchase the building from the contractors who built it, as well as buying a 200-acre wooden parkland on the summit of Sydenham Hill in south-east London. The huge profits generated by the Great Exhibition had made Paxton very wealthy, and he chose to invest in the extension of his building, both temporally and spatially. Unconstricted by time or cost, it doubled in its surface area of glass. It was an extended, enlarged and mutated form of its original, free from external considerations such as surrounding architecture or lack of space.

The rebuilding of the Crystal Palace in its enlarged configuration began in 1852 and was completed in 1854, during which time the grounds in Sydenham were transformed into an enormous landscaped park, which was as much an element of the spectacular display as any of the objects in the Great Exhibition. This is the demonstration that the museological form of the exhibition hall has a greater scope than the notion of the displaying of portable, or confinable objects. The artefact of material culture is, as Susan M. Pearce suggests, expandable to the extent that 'the whole of cultural expression, one way or another, falls within the realm of material culture'. As material culture, this becomes potential museum material, as does a more conventionally scaled 'thing' or 'specimen':

Strictly speaking, the lumps of the physical world to which cultural value is ascribed include not merely those discrete lumps capable of being moved from one place to another... but also the larger physical world of landscape with all the social structure that it carries, the animal and plant species which have been affected by humankind (and most have), the prepared meals which the animals have become, and even the manipulation of flesh and air which produces song and speech.³⁶⁷

This is a vital concept in the understanding of the outlook of the new Crystal Palace: it was looking upon the visible domain as its own spectacle, and therefore as included within its own narratives. The panoramic landscape and all that it contained was held in the discourse of the display. This was unprecedented on such a scale as a public, commercial, entertainment. The sprawling, expansive and mutated nature of the new Crystal Palace was reflective of this attempt to encompass as much as possible. The technology of the panoramic display at Sydenham is that of *selection*, which is the technology of the museological, in which an object

has been turned into material culture, because, through its selection and display, it has become a part of the world of human values, a part which,

evidently, every visitor wants to bring within his own personal value system.³⁶⁸

This is a process that works against a romantic, sublime notion of landscape in which the subject is encompassed by infinite scale which cannot be comprehended. Instead, the appearance of the sublime is rendered as a controlled attraction or entertainment.

Paxton envisaged a spectacular environment. He bought trees, plants and flowers, some of the very rare, for both an internal 'winter garden' as well as the surrounding grounds. A network of fountains was created with the intention of rivalling those at Versailles. In order to power the water circulation system, two very tall and technologically elaborate water towers were built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, flanking the building. Throughout the grounds were laid out a maze, a grotto, a rosary, groves, temples, lawns, lakes and islands. A process of appropriation on an international scale was initiated to provide material to be cast to help fill the internal courts, as well as to ornament the external terraces, with statuary that would be drawn from as broad a base of classical European sculpture as possible in order to convey a representational conception of civilisation. The remains of this project are the figures that can be found amongst the ruins of the site.

Inside the central transept was Osler's Crystal Fountain – 27 feet high and made from four tons of pure crystal glass - which had been a star exhibit of the Great Exhibition. From there, running down the north nave was the series of 'fine art' courts, each one illustrating a particular period in the embryonic discourse of the 'history of art'. Another star exhibit from Hyde Park, Pugin's Mediaeval Court, had been put on display, inspiring an entire series of related simulacra. It was placed in a teleological series which included courts of Grecian and Roman style, Assyrian, Egyptian – which contained Sphinxes, obelisks and a collection of artificial mummies that were overlooked by full sized reproductions of two colossal statues - Byzantine, Romanesque, a recreation of a house disinterred from the ruins of Pompeii, ancient Chinese architectural style, a version of the Alhambra and a Renaissance court. This was an attempt to build a spectacularised illustration of the

development of architecture. Sculpture and mural decoration up to the 16th century so that the visitor:

(...) might gain, in practical fashion, an idea of the successive stages of civilisation which have from time to time arisen in the world, have changed or sunk into decadence, have been violently overthrown, or have passed away, by the aggressions of barbarians, or the no less degrading agency of sensual and enervating luxury'.³⁶⁹

This impermanence seems aimed at suggesting the permanence and superiority of the British Empire. It reflected European prejudices of non-western societies, either as home to once great but now decadent, degraded cultures, or as examples of 'primitive' antecedents – echoes of which can be found in the dinosaur sculptures, representations of a previous impermanent order now extinct. The progressive development of the courts, perhaps focusing on the fountain as an apex, clearly places an emphasis that could be read as evolutionary.

There were also displays of thousands of natural history specimens, which included displays of various ethnographic groups of people:

Life like and life sized groups of Bushmen, Zulu, Kaffir, Mexican Indian, Hindoos, Tibetans etc. with zoological and botanical specimens of the several countries.³⁷⁰

This horrific display turned people into crude, racially categorised, signifiers that were equivalent to the trophies and curiosities of natural history, hunting and colonial domination.³⁷¹ Again, there is an evocation of some notion of a dominatory process of evolution which serves as the history for the time of display. It is also worth noting that in addition to the equivalence that these representations bestowed on people with the flora and fauna of their homes, they were not actually stuffed specimens. Therefore a level of equivalence is achieved between the actual, preserved, bodies of animals as items of display, and convincing replicas of people.

The notion of a distinction between authentic and replica, as with all the displays in and around the Crystal Palace, is therefore never implied.

Also contained within the Crystal Palace was a tropical department which included Paxton's favourite lily. This was the Victoria Regia lily, for which Paxton designed a glasshouse at Chatsworth, Derbyshire. In 1849, his daughter – Annie Paxton – demonstrated the structural strength of its leaf by sitting upon one in its water tank. The underside of the leaf inspired the two way spanning structural rib system of the lily house and subsequently of the Crystal Palace. Other botanical features included an orangery and representing live fauna. A monkey house added to the impression of a tropical biosphere to withstand the English climate. There was a gallery of old and contemporary paintings, of which little has been recorded, a 'carriage department' providing an assortment of 'approved styles'. It also contained an extensive library and reading room, a court of kings and queens, a hall of fame, a theatre, a concert room with 4000 seats and a Grand Orchestra built around a giant organ with over 4500 pipes. There was an area described as a museum, which specialised in raw materials for food, industrial and craft based production from around the world. There were photographic facilities for public and professional use, a school of art, which incorporated lessons in science, literature, geography at elementary and advanced levels. Furthermore, lessons in decorative art, university style lectures in English and German literature and general history were available, in addition to a school of engineering, a music school, secondary schools and departments for catering and refreshment. A tradition of various side shows had also been established at an early stage.

During its first thirty years, the Crystal Palace received an average of 2,000,000 visitors per year. Two new railway lines were built to facilitate the huge numbers of visitors, creating a profound influence on the shaping and development of South London as a whole. As well as the addition of the huge marine aquarium in 1872, an enormous zoetrope was opened in 1868. Powered by a gas engine, this provided the first mass audience with examples of moving images. As well as the regular attraction of balloon ascents, there were all manner of temporary events, such as rose shows, dog shows, poultry shows, in addition to trade fairs and various

kinds of arts, crafts and industrial exhibition. It was commonly used as a meeting place for thousands of large organisations. There were also numerous concerts, music festivals, circuses and pantomimes. There were special performances, such as John M. East's *Invasion*, each performance drawing at least 25,000 spectators. This was carefully timed to begin just before dusk. On the open space in front of the terraces a full-sized village had been built in great detail. The village was completed by a crowd of inhabitants, complete with carriages and horses and a regiment of soldiers. The village was then attacked by an overhead Zeppelin, dropping bombs on the school and the church, before invading troops parachuted down onto the village leading to a full-scale battle on the ground. The ruined village had then to be reconstructed for every performance. One of the Crystal Palace's speciality events was the holding of vast and elaborate fireworks displays, which became a common feature. The Palace also had a great symbolic importance in its first 30 years. For example, in 1872, Disraeli gave a speech promoting the Empire as central to the Conservative party, utilising the site as both a representation of the nation and Empire. However, the popularity of the site began to wane towards the end of the century. Two factors that were influential in this drop in attendance were the Lord's Day Observance Society, which won an injunction to have the Palace and grounds closed on Sundays, and the increasing appeal of seaside resorts, which were becoming more accessible due to the growth of railways networks and a general increase in national earnings. Although *The Times* newspaper said in 1904 that the Crystal Palace was 'becoming an illustrated encyclopedia of this great and varied universe', it was by the 1890s in financial crises and starting to resemble the shadow of its former greatness.

The scale and diversity of the Crystal Palace is mirrored in Wells's fossilised equivalent from the future. There is much more to the Palace of Green Porcelain than the palaeontological displays among which the Time Traveller initially finds himself:

To judge from the size of the place, this palace of Green Porcelain had a great deal more in it than a Gallery of Palaeontology; possibly historical

galleries; it might be, even a library! To me, at least in my present circumstances, these would be vastly more interesting than this spectacle of old-time geology in decay. Exploring, I found another short gallery running transversely to the first. This appeared to be devoted to minerals(.)³⁷²

As his exploration continues, he passes quickly through the mineralogy displays, and enters into another hall running parallel to the first one he had entered containing the remains of prehistoric fossils. While recognising its original designation, this gallery is described as 'ruinous':

Apparently this section had been devoted to natural history, but everything had long since passed out of recognition. A few shrivelled and blackened vestiges of what had once been stuffed animals, desiccated mummies in jars that had once held spirit, a brown dust of departed plants: that was all!³⁷³

The Time Traveller expresses regret at the condition of the remains of this collection, as he 'should have been glad to trace the patient re-adjustments by which the conquest of animated nature had been attained.'³⁷⁴ His sorrow is one of failing to recreate what the Palace represents - the visualisation of incremental and, ultimately, progressive change. Yet the impossibility of his perception of such a process from the collection is due, precisely, to the polarised inverse of evolutionary development in the form of temporal degeneration.

In his further exploration of the Palace of Green Porcelain, the Time Traveller passes through more galleries, and discovers what he is able to identify, from what look like hanging tattered flags, as a library:

The brown and charred rags that hung from the sides of it, I presently recognized as the decaying vestiges of books. They had long since dropped to pieces, and every semblance of print had left them. But here and there were warped boards and cracked metallic clasps that told the tale well enough. Had I been a literary man I might, perhaps, have moralized upon the

futility of all ambition. But as it was, the thing that struck me with keenest force was the enormous waste of labour to which this sombre wilderness of rotting paper testified. At the time I will confess that I thought chiefly of the *Philosophical Transactions* and my own seventeen papers upon physical optics.³⁷⁵

After this comes what he describes as a 'gallery of technical chemistry',³⁷⁶ in which the Time Traveller finds the matches and camphor that promise to be his redemptive advantage over the photophobic Morlocks. Here, as discussed in Chapter 1, these discoveries are unusual, in that the materials have escaped the ravages of an unimaginable span of time, and remain intact and perfectly functional:

Now, I still think that for this box of matches to have escaped the wear of time for immemorial years was a most strange, as for me it was a most fortunate, thing.³⁷⁷

It could be suggested that such an improbability stresses the metaphorical nature of temporal distance at play in *The Time Machine*. By this, I refer particularly to Parrinder's assertion that there is more than one sense of temporal depth present within the text.

Parrinder states that Wells's vision of time travel had been shaped by the prehistoric vistas opened up by the disciplinary emergence of geology and archaeology in the nineteenth century. The panoramic spectacle of such vistas, are evoked both in the far distant future in which the Time Traveller observes the twilight of the Earth, and in the Epilogue. This closing passage of the novel, voiced by Hillyer, the 'outer' narrator, offers speculation on where, or rather when, the Time Traveller has disappeared to; whether he is in 'Age of Unpolished Stone', at the bottom of a now vanished ocean, or among giant and grotesque dinosaurs.³⁷⁸ Parrinder focuses, however, on the primary date of the Time Traveller's journey - 802,701, and to a lesser extent on the final era of the Earth as experienced by the Time Traveller on the edge of the sea another twenty-nine million years in the

future. In the genesis of the novel, the temporal distance traversed by the Time Traveller was expanded from ten thousand years to eighty times as much. The first version of *The Time Machine* was serialised in the *National Observer* between March and June 1894. In this ur-form, the age in which the Time Traveller encounters the Eloi and Morlocks is identified as 12,203.

However, in December 1894, Wells outlined an evolutionary scheme that was incompatible with this relatively short time frame. In his essay 'The Rate of Change in Species', Wells drew attention to the fact that any possible rate of change was determined by gaps between generations and the average of maturity within each species:

Evolution by natural selection – the strictly Darwinian model to which Wells and Huxley adhered – could not have brought about significant changes within the human species within recorded history, so that any such changes must be cultural, not natural in origin.³⁷⁹

The evolutionary transformation of humanity demonstrated in *The Time Machine*, according to Parrinder, had to be for Wells one that demonstrated a natural process of hypothetical selection and change, rather than due to any artificial processes of eugenics. The date is therefore determined in general scale by a credible period, at least by Wells's understanding, that would allow the significant changes to take place and define these two forms of descendent. The appropriate depth of time is also taken into account for the distant temporal horizon in *The Time Machine*. The degeneration of the sun itself reflected a vision of the universe as a limited and finite set of energy sources. This cosmology is that of Lord Kelvin's Laws of Thermodynamics. As Parrinder points out, a young Wells had played with the illusory possibilities of transcending this laws:

As a student, Wells had once engaged in a spoof demonstration of a perpetual motion machine (powered by a concealed electromagnet) – a thermodynamic impossibility not unlike a time machine, since both depend

on the ability to bypass the normal framework of what, in a lost article, he had called the 'Universe Rigid'.³⁸⁰

Wells is prepared to transcend this law with respect to the time machine itself. This is the fantastic element that he introduces into an otherwise believable, credible and concretely realised world. All other processes must respect the laws to which they relate. The evolution of humanity's descendants requires a period long enough to allow their degeneration to correlate to received biological knowledge. The degeneration of the Solar System is bound by the same regulatory limitations. The second law of Thermodynamics made clear that the sun must burn out, as energy tends towards dispersal. The movement is one of entropy, as is the narrative of *The Time Machine* itself. Although twentieth-century studies in radiation were to suggest a much longer time scale, which Wells had to acknowledge made his portrayal much too alarmist, in the 1890s the view of the sun was not as a vast nuclear reactor, but rather as a giant coal burning machine.

The depth of this credibly rendered temporal scheme represents, according to Parrinder, one of the two parallel and conflated forms of time that is described in the novel. It represents a form of time that relates to biological, geological, and astronomical processes. The other form of time identified by Parrinder is one that could be described as social in character:

The order of the figures in 802,701 suggests a suitably entropic and cyclical 'running-down' number. We can explain how Wells may have arrived at it, however, by the supposition that *The Time Machine* embodies not one future timescale but two. The two scales, those of historical time measured by the rise and fall of cultures and civilisations, and of biological time measured by the evolution and devolution of the species, are superimposed upon one another.³⁸¹

Parrinder's argument regarding the choice of date takes as its starting point the assumption that the contemporary focus of the narrative is actually also a forward

projection, so that the Time Traveller's dinner party takes place in the year 1901. The Time Traveller's journey can therefore be charted as 800,800 years, with 1901 as its starting point. This figure is what Parrinder describes as 'a significantly bifurcated number'.³⁸² 800 years is a long enough duration to describe substantial changes in history, enough to see the rise and fall of a civilisation or two. These changes are recorded by the Time Traveller as he journeys forward:

What strange developments of humanity, what wonderful advances upon our rudimentary civilization, I thought, might not appear when I came to look nearly into the dim elusive world that raced and fluctuated before my eyes! I saw great and splendid architecture rising about me, more massive than any buildings of our own time, and yet, as it seemed, built of glimmer and mist.³⁸³

While on the surface appearing superior to the buildings of the present, they also lack any lasting substance. Seemingly solid, they literally melt into air. The sight of these structures is replaced by greenery, which seems to remain without any seasonal change. While the natural world seems to change less, the architectural structures he sees before him appear ephemeral and move from his focus. This is a view that is subject to the forces of change. This is historical time. It conveys the diegetic realisation of Carlyle's Riddle of the Sphinx. Yet the date after such a journey would only be the year 2701. To this Wells needed to add an adequate period of evolutionary duration of nearly one million years, settling on the figure of 800,000. The combination of these two timescales, Parrinder suggests, leads to the satisfyingly poetic total of 802,701 as the year of the Time Traveller's encounter with the Eloi and Morlocks. It is both one of credibility in terms of the biological changes necessary, and in its sequential decreasing, suggestive of entropic processes. Yet this figure still relies on the 800-year frame in order to account for the endurance of classical forms of architecture and landscape, and for the survival of the Palace of Green Porcelain and its contents, such as the matches and camphor that still function. The Palace is another form of remarkable conflation in the novel. The act of superimposition can be identified here, not only in terms of the different

timescales of historical and evolutionary duration, but in terms of the coming together of time and space. The museological impulses exploited by Wells are articulations of both time and space, working through the imagining and realisation of one through the configuration of the other. Both take on the quality of medium within the Palace of Green Porcelain as an imaginative reiteration of the Crystal Palace. And it is to the notion of space that the next chapter will be addressed.

Chapter 5: The Spatial Zones of *The Time Machine*

This chapter is premised on the apparent sense in which the Time Traveller never actually leaves his home, as the machine moves in time and not space. I'd like to suggest that distinctions between interior and exterior are severely eroded in the novel, providing a unifying device with which to consider a speculative notion of material culture. The breadth of vision applied to the scope of museologically orientated material culture, applicable to entire landscapes, is fused with the sense of artefactually rendered domestic intimacy found in the Time Traveller's home. The principle sites constructed in the narrative can be identified as three separate, yet overlaid zones. The first is that of the Time Traveller's home. The second is the general landscape of 802,701, and the third is the apocalyptic beach at the Earth's twilight. A fourth, interstitial, zone could also be added to this list in the form of the space of temporal transition experienced during time travel. These zones are overlaid in that they all occupy the same space at different times, although their geographical boundaries are not fixed. The space of 802,701 is mapped at a much larger scale than that of the 1890s, (or arguably, as Parrinder suggested in the previous chapter, the year 1901) which can be generally limited to the Time Traveller's home, yet these spaces are inextricably linked. The details, connections and differences of these various zones accumulate to hint at a particular narrative relating to interior and exterior, reinforcing a peculiar sense that the Time Traveller is still contained within his domestic workshop as he journeys to the future and back again.

It is the Time Traveller's home that I would like to look at in detail first, as it is the zone that serves to both construct and anchor all others within the novel. This interior space is a meticulously crafted environment in which the politicised tension that Wells depicts in the future is staged with equal, albeit codified, bluntness. The readability of the Time Traveller's home as a fictional interior finds some parallel in Ruskin's public defence of William Holman Hunt's painting *The Awakening Conscience* (1853). This work was conceived as a counterpart to his *Light of the World*. In order to execute this image, Hunt hired a room in St John's Wood in London in order to convincingly depict the scene. The painting depicts a seated man, with his mistress upon his knee in the room

used for their secret meetings. The moment is one of spiritual revelation, as a socially and sexually entrapped young girl rises from her illicit lover and gazes into a sunlit garden, placed behind the viewer, but reflected in a mirror. While depicting redemption from moral depravity, the immediate appearance of things generated a less complex reading, as A.N. Wilson suggests: *The Awakening Conscience*, depicting the world of the 'kept woman', awoke some raw nerves among the critics.³⁸⁴

The painting found a defender in Ruskin, who recognised a dimension beyond the metaphors of sexuality. In a letter to *The Times* of 25 May 1854, he made a case for the painting as a scathing critique of wealth generated by industrial capitalism. The moral destructiveness of this new and unchecked affluence could be read, Ruskin stated, in the tasteless furnishings depicted in *The Awakening Conscience*:

There is not a single object in all that room - common, modern, vulgar (in the vulgar sense, as it may be), but it becomes tragical, if rightly read, that furniture so carefully painted, even to the last vein of the rosewood - is there nothing to learn from that terrible lustre of it, from its fatal newness; nothing there that has the old thoughts of home upon it, or that is ever to become a part of home...³⁸⁵

In a similar manner, the interior at the beginning of *The Time Machine* is symbolically rendered in a manner that contradicts the initial appearance of things. Suvin has drawn attention to the contrast of spatial register in the novel, which he argues is a common structural element in the scientific romances, characterised by a destructive newness encroaching upon the tranquillity of the Victorian environment. The inner and outer framework of the narrative is also seen by Suvin as a means of establishing this collision: 'The framework is set in surroundings as staid and familiarly Dickensian as possible, such as the cozy study of *The Time Machine*'.³⁸⁶ However, I would like to read this interior space as a meticulously crafted environment in which the politicised tension that Wells depicts in the future is staged with equal, albeit codified, bluntness. What appears to be an environment of domestic refinement and comfort contains an explicit reference to the chairs upon which the guests in the Time Traveller's home sit: 'Our chairs, being his patents, embraced and caressed us rather than submitted to be sat upon'.³⁸⁷

Leon Stover, in his rigorous literary analysis of the novel, identifies the chairs as a direct reference to William Morris, designer, craftsman, writer and poet. As a leading figure in the Arts and Crafts Movement, Morris responded to Ruskin's call to arms:

In the coming decades, William Morris was to wage war on the factory-made ugliness of Victorian domestic interiors, and to expand, even more trenchantly than Ruskin himself, on the intimate connections between morality, as socially and privately understood, and design.³⁸⁸

That these chairs are uncannily comfortable sets up the Time Traveller in competition with Morris, who was the first to patent a cushioned chair with a backrest that could be inclined. This inexplicable quality suggests that Morris's patent has been surpassed. Although not named in the text, Morris is also one of the guests of the Time Traveller on the night of his return from the future. He is described, in a manner that is designed to be insulting, as 'a quiet, shy man with a beard – whom I didn't know, and who, as far as my observation went, never opened his mouth all the evening.'³⁸⁹ The sophistication of the chair design in relation to anything that Morris had been able to build indicates an assumed superiority of social theory articulated within the narrative. *The Time Machine* is referentially set up as a favourable and surpassing comparison with Morris's own socialist utopian fantasy, *News from Nowhere* (1891). However, this rigidly deterministic reading ignores the very qualities that are supposed to indicate the politicisation of the chairs: their technological sophistication, the illusion of some form of agency as a result and the peculiar dissolution of a series of physical, psychic and technological boundaries. These chairs are prosthetic extensions that respond to a form of instrumental but unskilled control. The situation is described not in terms of a body in a chair, but as an erosion of distinctions between the two. The chairs are useful in sustaining a general sense of erosion throughout the narrative, which is mirrored in a general absence of distinction between interior and exterior in the future landscape, as well as by the negation of spatial distance implicit in the operation of time travel.

Reading Wells's novel as a material world has also initiated an engagement with some early positions set out by Jean Baudrillard. As a theorist of cultural forms, his work

has helped both to establish a tradition of thinking about objects, and extending such practices away from the more orthodox disciplinary sites of material culture discourse. In particular, my argument will make use of the logical and interpretative tension present in his essay 'The Ecstasy of Communication' (1987). The chairs hint at an unskilled instrumentality that Baudrillard describes as 'private telematics': 'each person sees himself at the controls of a hypothetical machine, isolated in a position of perfect and remote sovereignty, at an infinite distance from his universe of origin.'³⁹⁰ For Baudrillard, this is a model of the realisation of a living satellite within quotidian space.³⁹¹ The notion of interior is radically destabilised here, meaning that both the interiority of a subject and the architectural interior are no longer the sites where drama is played out in an engagement with objects and images. Baudrillard counters the foundation of his earlier argument made in *The System of Objects*, which relies on the meaningful opposition of subject/object (material artefact) and public/private, as well as the privileging of 'a domestic scene, a scene of interiority, a private space-time.'³⁹² His position shifts from one of scene and mirror to screen and network, a non-reflecting surface of communication. The very space of habitation – both psychic and architectural – can be conceived of as a point of regulation and organisation within a series of 'multiple networks'. The telematic apparatus of the time machine allows the protagonist to travel without leaving his home, which I'd like to suggest, as the site of the novel, functions analogously to this hypothetical space.

The obvious form of apparatus of private telematics that dominates the novel is the time machine itself. Within the literal operating space of the machine, the Time Traveller literally plays out the tendencies already revealed by the chairs he provides for his guests at home. The Time Traveller is placed at the controls of a fantastic machine that Wells has conjured as a believable but clearly phantasmatic and imaginary form. The machine that Baudrillard suggests as metaphor is realised as something both believably concrete, diegetically real, yet still very hypothetical. The control of the machine is certainly unskilled.³⁹³ The motion is 'helpless' and 'headlong', suggesting an extreme lack of control in the operation of the machine, and his first attempt to stop the machine, itself a panicked response to the possible danger of materialising within solid matter, results in his being thrown headfirst from the machine. While his ability to control the

machine improves in the subsequent journeys forward and back, it hardly seems to demonstrate the need for much in the form of any so-called skilled operation.

The other aspect of the time machine that seems peculiarly analogous to the hypothetical one described by Baudrillard is the sense of 'remote sovereignty' that it attains. This quality could be manifested in two ways. One is through the effect experienced as the Time Traveller views the space outside of his machine when in transit. The other is as a remote and alienated subject hurled to a world of radical alterity, in which he is an often detached viewer and interpreter. The first of these two categories might also be subdivided into a form of remote sovereignty that is perhaps more practical in its essential definition. The very act of starting the machine, 'with a thud', separates the Time Traveller in a most profound and fundamental way, from the world. He and the machine, as it is theorised by the Psychologist after the demonstration of the Time Traveller's maquette, are rendered invisible by the speed of transit, in the way that a spoke of a spinning wheel is unseen. In his activated machine he cannot be perceived or touched by anyone outside. Nor is he effected by, or seemingly connected to in any way, the passage of time outside the immediate zone of influence that seems to be generated by the machine's motion. He is totally separated from the world, not just at any given time, but so profoundly removed that the concept no longer applies. The most constant of boundaries, those marked by the transition of day to night, becomes but the like 'the flapping of a black wing'.³⁹⁴

His transition from the world of temporal and spatial stability to the status of transit is marked by a visible effect, from hazy and dark 'then fainter and ever fainter'.³⁹⁵ This is a transition from one world to another, from the shared field of all humanity to an isolated and singularly personal bubble-like private universe. This transition is marked here in the passage that describes the very beginning of the Time Traveller's first journey not only by this initial visual effect suggesting the isolation of the protagonist from the world around him, but also subsequently through sound, followed by a change in mental state: 'An eddying murmur filled my ears, and a strange, dumb confusedness descended on my mind'.³⁹⁶ Whether the sound is real, or an effect of the general sense of overwhelmed confusion, is ambiguous, particularly as sound itself seems not to travel directly from the high-speed outside world.

The other category that can be constructed from this first sense of 'remote sovereignty' is one that privileges visuality. While he is so profoundly detached from the world, he is at the same time able to view change at an inconceivably rapid pace. This is rendered before his eyes as a form of visual spectacle. While the spectacle of time travel resembles the commodified space of proto-cinematic visual illusions, it differs radically from those forms of entertainment in the lack of a contractual obligation that guarantees the status of illusion, and therefore of safety, that as Scott Bukatman suggests, characterised pre-cinematic popular spectacle:

The spectacle was a simulacrum of reality, but spectators weren't fooled by these illusions – by paying admission, the customer indicated a comprehension of the terms of the exhibition. Some pleasure however, clearly derived from responding to these entertainments *as if they were real*.³⁹⁷

While the safety of the contractual agreement of commodification, guaranteeing the fakeness, and thus safeness, of spectacle, the panoptic power suggested by Bukatman sheds light on the view of the change from the perspective of the time machine:

Visual spectacle provided reassurance in the form of a panoptic power – the human subject was, after all, capable of perceiving and comprehending the new conditions of physical reality through the projection of an almost omnipotent gaze out into the represented world.³⁹⁸

This perspective is one that is experienced by the Time Traveller, an apparent panoptic mastery over the visible world before him. He can seemingly control the change of pace before him, an appearance of control serving to isolate him further from the world, enforcing the status of 'remote isolation' that Baudrillard describes. However, despite the illusion of control in the form of panoptic power, the resemblance this experience bears to pay-to-view spectacle collapses in the absence of the contract of commodification. This is genuine, and genuinely dangerous.

So while these categories constitute one sense of remote sovereignty as the experience of operating the time machine, another can be found in the resulting experience of the Time Traveller as an anachronism in the future. While he is ultimately implied in the events of the future, primarily through the theft of the time machine and the general threat of the Morlocks, his general position is one of passive observer. He is concerned with the process of deduction and analysis, and is obsessed with recovering his ability to escape from that time. His encounter is often one of remote sovereignty in the sense of his overlooking of population, history, architecture and landscape, of conflating them as one. At times it is as if he is an omniscient deity overseeing the progress of some civilization below.

When reading the account of the Time Traveller's domestic space, it is necessary to acknowledge that what appears from a contemporary perspective as the establishing of relaxed and comfortable atmosphere contained some unambiguous references:

The fire burnt brightly, and the soft radiance of the incandescent lights in the lilies of silver caught the bubbles that flashed and passed in out glasses. (...) , and there was that luxurious after-dinner atmosphere, when thought runs gracefully free of the trammels of precision.³⁹⁹

Stover has identified the presence of two specific charges being made in this brief passage. The first of these addresses the condition of the lighting. The incandescence, made clear by later references to non-electric lighting, is generated by gas mantles. This is a jab at the failure of the entire district of Richmond, the location of the Time Traveller's house, to be electrified. In the convincing narrative Stover has constructed, which he argues would have been clearly identified by an audience in the 1890s, Wells is identifying a ruling class that has failed to take adequate control of the transformative processes of technological modernity.⁴⁰⁰ This was an attitude that attempted to sustain elements of an aristocratic lifestyle with localised interests, which was resistant to the idea of large-scale electrification. The Electric Lighting Act of 1888 was seen as the formal manifestation of this attitude. It gave local authorities control over the process of electrification and whether or not it would be introduced, which meant that it was

impossible to build consistent networks of supply. Where it was used, electricity was generated and distributed to a bewildering degree of incompatibility. The other charge within the passage is one I have already given an account of - a respectful conflict with the political views of William Morris, articulated through the description of technologically advanced and superlatively comfortable armchairs.

While a site of politicised tensions as well as covert satire and critique, the Time Traveller's home is introduced in the opening paragraph of the novel as a site of both luxurious comfort, and technological sophistication - despite the presence of gas, rather than electric, lighting. This is a space of conflicting tendencies, of comfort and tension, futuristically elaborate furniture and obsolete services. As the guests relax in this luxurious tension, The Time Traveller begins to conversationally pave the way for his subsequent revelation, in the form of the miniature time machine: 'And he put it to us in this way (...) as we sat and lazily admired his earnestness over this new paradox (as we thought it) and his fecundity.'⁴⁰¹ That the Time Traveller should be taken as describing a 'paradox'⁴⁰² does much to heighten the contradictory presence of such conflicting aspects within such a brief account of an interior scene.

So what is it possible to glean from the text as to the nature of the Time Traveller's home, its spatial contexts, and its interiors and contents? I will attempt to map out the materialised presence of his living and work space, as well as the objects that serve to constitute the narrative fabric. To begin with, the house can be placed somewhere within a cartography of familiar reference points. The location of the house is identified by Hillyer, upriver from, but south-west of Central London, without any sense of ambiguity: 'The next Thursday I went again to Richmond - I suppose I was one of the Time Traveller's most constant guests'.⁴⁰³ While this fact is made clear within the outer narrator's own time period, the localised geography is expanded by the Time Traveller's explorations of the landscape in the year 802,701. After the time machine is removed from its point of arrival, and dragged inside the base of the Sphinx, the Time Traveller is resolved to the idea of gathering knowledge about the future world, that might, in indirect form, lead back towards a solution of how to recover the machine. However, despite the increasing radius of his wandering survey, he still feels restricted to a space around his own home, and in an oblique manner limited by its virtual and enclosing presence: 'Yet a

certain feeling, you may understand, tethered me in a circle of a few miles round the point of my arrival.⁴⁰⁴ This circle is in a sense both defined by and an extension of the Time Traveller's home as the focal site of the novel's spatial orientation.

Soon after his arrival, the Time Traveller explores the immediate vicinity of his home:

At first things were very confusing. Everything was so entirely different from the world I had known - even the flowers. The big building I had left was situate (sic) on the slope of a broad river valley, but the Thames had shifted, perhaps, a mile from its present position.⁴⁰⁵

When seeking to recover his stolen machine, the quest of the Time Traveller could be imagined as a process of seeking to restore the altered landscape in which he finds himself to its original condition. Finding himself stuck in the future is to be castaway upon a distorted perversion of a familiar terrain. This perversion is taken to its most extreme form after the Time Traveller's escape from the year 802,701:

The machine was standing on a sloping beach. The sea stretched away to the south-west, to rise into a sharp bright horizon against the wan sky. There were no breakers and no waves, for not a breath of wind was stirring. Only a slight oily swell rose and fell like a gentle breathing, and showed that the eternal sea was still moving and living. And along the margin where the water sometimes broke was a thick incrustation of salt - pink under the lurid sky. There was a sense of oppression in my head, and I noticed that I was breathing very fast. The sensations reminded me of my only experience of mountaineering, and from that I judged the air to be more rarefied than it is now.⁴⁰⁶

Rather than explore this monstrous scene by foot, by bodily moving about the beach, he explores by skipping forwards in time to observe changes and gain a better understanding of the circumstances around him. He travels in strides across time, rather than through a vulnerable clamber across the beach.

Yet spatially, his existence is still narrowly defined, and metaphorically contained within that of not only his own time, but I would suggest his own space. His only connection to the sanity and substance of his own time is to be physically in contact with the machine, to be touching it or seated upon it at all times. In response to a thickening darkness of the sky, the Time Traveller becomes nauseous with horror, his body shivering and breathing becoming painful:

I got off the machine to recover myself. I felt giddy and incapable of facing the return journey. As I stood sick and confused I saw again the moving thing upon the shoal – there was no mistake now that it was a moving thing – against the red water of the sea. It was a round thing, the size of a football perhaps, or, it may be, bigger, and tentacles trailed down from it; it seemed black against the weltering blood-red water, and it was hopping fitfully about. Then I felt I was fainting. But a terrible dread of lying helpless in that remote and awful twilight sustained me while I clambered upon the saddle.⁴⁰⁷

To be detached from the machine in this extreme perversion of his own familiar spatial existence suggests nothing less than the annihilation of self, lying helpless within a world where humanity has long since ceased to exist, except perhaps in the strange form floating by the water's edge. This is not the first time in the novel that Wells suggests a relationship between physical contact with the machine, and the Time Traveller's sense of embodied safety. When he first meets the Eloi, he is poised to operate the machine, fearful that he might have to make an escape. Upon beholding their physical appearance and benevolent demeanour, he regains confidence: 'I took my hands from the machine'.⁴⁰⁸

This vision of portentous horror that the Time Traveller beholds on the sea shore forms one end of an arc that describes a space within the novel that is both consistent and yet multifarious. It is one that might be rendered as singular, yet comprised of glaring incompatibilities that jar and compete. This suggested arc is one that traces the movement of the three, or possibly four, principle spaces present in *The Time Machine*: the Time Traveller's home and its immediate environment, the landscape of 802,701, the beach at

the end of the world, and, tentatively, the interstitial space of time travel itself. It is less the case that these are each linked, but rather I would like to suggest that each is somehow a shade of the other. The interior space of the house and workshop in Richmond both contains and is surrounded by the oily swell and desolate beach of the far future.

Like the two zones of contemporary Richmond and the beach at the end of the Earth, the space of 802,701 is weaved within the same arc. In order to generate a sense of this space and how it might be thought of in terms of a sense of materiality and material culture, I would like to begin to sketch the general terrain of the landscape of the Eloi and the Morlocks from a humbly quotidian perspective; the weather. The Time Traveller arrives in this epoch amidst a suitably dramatic storm, which reflects his violent arrival in the future:

There was the sound of a clap of thunder in my ears. I may have been stunned for a moment. A pitiless hail was hissing round me, and I was sitting on soft turf in front of the overset machine.⁴⁰⁹

This is severe and extreme in its peculiarity in the context of the climatic temperament of the 802,701. There are no other indications of such violent weather. In fact, the tendency observed by the Time Traveller suggests quite the opposite, that all nature and climate have somehow been placated. While this is initially suggestive of some form of unimaginably advanced progress, it actually indicates passivity, decadence and degeneration, reflecting the same apathy that has affected the bodies of the Eloi.

Indeed, the hail storm that marks this violent arrival, as a kind of rupture in the smooth veneer of the apparent achievements of future civilizations, serves as a device to dramatically introduce the novel's main theme. It does so through the sequential manifestation of the Sphinx, Carlyle's motif of immanent social degradation, through the shroud of hail. Although it is indistinct in the midst of the deluge, it is all that the Time Traveller can discern. This uncharacteristically adverse weather stands out and describes the unveiling of the Sphinx as a central thematic device with a distinct emphasis.

The improved climate, that this storm provides such a contrast to, is at once suggestive of a classical Arcadia, yet retains its degenerative connotations:

I think I have said how much hotter than our own was the weather of this Golden Age. I cannot account for it. It may be that the sun was hotter, or the earth nearer the sun. It is usual to assume that the sun will go on cooling steadily in the future. But people, unfamiliar with such speculations as those of the younger Darwin, forget that the planets must ultimately fall back one by one into the parent body. As these catastrophes occur, the sun will blaze with renewed energy; and it may be that some inner planet has suffered this fate. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the sun was very much hotter than we know it.⁴¹⁰

The implications here are of entropic processes, of the sun losing energy as it burns out, and of the planets of the solar system spiralling inwards on degenerative orbits, unable to sustain a consistent distance from the sun. The very order that maintains the Earth itself is thought to be breaking down, leading to its ultimate destruction in fire. The destructive conflagration that the Time Traveller inadvertently starts in his flight from the Morlocks, perhaps a mirror image of this ultimate fate, is also linked to the transformed climate:

I don't know if you have ever thought what a rare thing flame must be in the absence of man and in a temperate climate. The sun's heat is rarely strong enough to burn, even when it is focused by dewdrops, as is sometimes the case in more tropical districts. Lightning may blast and blacken, but it rarely gives rise to widespread fire. Decaying vegetation may occasionally smoulder with the heat of its fermentation, but this rarely results in flame. In this decadence, too, the art of fire-making had been forgotten on the earth.⁴¹¹

The vulnerability of this climate to fire is again evidence of degenerative forces. This is a climate that itself propagates decadence.

Climate and landscape are not sharply differentiated in *The Time Machine*. This propinquity could be extended to the point at which climate and weather could be thought

of as extensions or qualities of landscape. This landscape, it should be remembered, is at once that of fin-de-siècle suburban South West London, and of a far distant world. It is simultaneously that of fantasised alterity, and that of quotidian familiarity. It is however a landscape that is inescapably Western. In some senses it is the epitome of landscape as it appears within a Western tradition. It relates to a sustained fiction of classical ideals and how they represent and are represented in landscape. In her arguments around Western notions of landscape and the privileging of 'views' as a historical category, Barbara Bender acknowledges the privileging of class within such schemes as they are represented. Bender suggests that landscape, as a Western construction, was something to be looked at or over, with dual values of commodity and aesthetic value conjoined: 'beauty was in the eye of the be-holder'.⁴¹² Landscape as a source of visual appeal is inseparable from notions of ownership. This can be seen both through painting, in modes of positioning oneself in relation to landscape, and through the physical creation and modification of the land and its contents:

We need to ask not only about the interaction between particular social, economic and political conditions and ways of engaging with the land but more precisely *who* is doing the interacting, and how. Or rather, who *appears* to be doing the interacting - where, in this scheme of things, are the labourers whose villages are removed to make way for the landscaped estate and whose physical labour is airbrushed from park and garden?⁴¹³

This question holds a particular resonance for the landscape of 802,701. It is the mystery of the future world in *The Time Machine*, that the Time Traveller must gradually uncover through piling speculation upon speculation in his attempts to provide an analysis of this world.

This is a landscape that appears idealised yet that marks with exaggerated emphasis this almost total erasure of class difference, embodied in the demarcation of species. The decadent Eloi inhabit a strangely decorative surface world that appears self-sustaining, as do the Eloi themselves. One pictorial impression gained by the Time Traveller sums up his initial impressions of this future landscape:

As I stood there musing over this too perfect triumph of man, the full moon, yellow and gibbous, came up out of an overflow of silver light in the north-east. The bright little figures ceased to move about below, a noiseless owl flitted by, and I shivered with the chill of the night.⁴¹⁴

This too perfect triumph is rendered very much in terms of visual culture, whether in terms of a dramatic tableau in the form of landscape painting, or a panorama of both landscape and history. It is a scene of a literally chilling silence, with an uncanny combination of stillness and movement. The emphasis in this scene is on the Time Traveller as immobile observer of a vista as image. I would like to suggest that it is perhaps reminiscent of the diorama as a form of spectacle and display. The diorama was a technique of visual spectacle developed by Louis Daguerre in the 1820s, which as Jonathan Crary observes, 'is based on the incorporation of an *immobile* observer into a mechanical apparatus and a subjection to a predesigned temporal unfolding of optical experience.'⁴¹⁵ There are two aspects to this similarity to which I would like to draw attention. The first is that of the immobile spectator, as suggestive of the Time Traveller as a tourist who doesn't actually leave home.

Crary acknowledges Marx's comments that the body in modernity was one that had to be transformed to accommodate new forms of movement and transportation. However, Crary argues that this adaptation must be seen in junction with an opposite movement, of vision being adapted to match a certain form of sedentary state of bodily movement:

One of the great technical innovations of the nineteenth century was the way in which the body was made adaptable to 'the few main fundamental forms of motion.' But if the modernization of the observer involved the adaptation of the eye to rationalized forms of movement, such a change coincided with and was possible only because of an increasing abstraction of optical experience from a stable referent.⁴¹⁶

The still body acts as a metaphor for a form of stable subjectivity, which as I have argued, is itself thrown into disarray in *The Time Machine*. The Time Traveller's views of landscape could therefore attain a similar form of anxious tension as those of embodied subjectivity in the novel.

The presence of the moon, 'yellow and gibbous', in the scene described above also could be read in terms of a reiteration of the previous chapter's conflation of time and space as there articulated within museological discourses. Here, it is nature through the lens of landscape marking cyclical repetition and imaginative manifestations of temporality. This provides an unexpected anthropological connection to landscape, space and time in the narrative of *The Time Machine*. The moon is a constant and universal form of the measuring and marking of duration. It follows sequences that can be charted and correlated with social activity, as E.E. Evans-Pritchard points out in his exhaustive study on the social structures of Nuer society in Africa:

When Nuer wish to define the occurrence of an event several days in advance, such as a dance or a wedding, they do so by reference to the phases of the moon: new moon, its waxing, full moon, its waning, and the brightness of its second quarter. When they wish to be precise they state on which night on the waxing or waning an event will take place, reckoning fifteen nights to each and thirty to the month.⁴¹⁷

The moon's specific status as a temporal signifier is lost on the Time Traveller. It stands in contrast to the 'flapping wing' effect of time travel as a visual experience, as day turns to night, and sun and moon shoot across the field of vision. The moon is static, and its predictable cycles apparently lost on the Eloi population. That they have no apparent concept of the moon's regularity is evidence of their loss of time as a sophisticated concept.

However, it is inappropriate to discount the presence of the moon as a marker of temporality in *The Time Machine*:

It occurred to me even then, that in the course of a few days the moon must pass through its last quarter, and the nights grow dark, when the appearances of these unpleasant creatures from below, these whitened Lemurs, this new vermin that had replaced the old, might be more abundant.⁴¹⁸

The light afforded by the moon offers some protection against the photophobic Morlocks. The recognition that the moon's light will rapidly diminish over the course of the next few days offers the Time Traveller a sense of horror and anxiety. The moon is registered by the Time Traveller in different stages. He is dependent upon its presence, as the only source of night in the nocturnal landscape. As full, it may cast an uncanny illumination over this world, but the phase of the new moon represents a source of terror: the Dark Nights in which the Morlocks hold sway.⁴¹⁹ This is an inversion of those modes of temporality as exemplified by the Palace of Green Porcelain. There time is given form by spatial arrangement. Here, space and movement become forms of both creating a sense of, and marking, time.

Yet despite the safety offered by the moon at its brightest, and the sense of temporal regularity marked by its universally traceable trajectory and sequence, the phases of the moon and its very orbit are not stable. The enforced presence of Kelvin's Laws of Thermodynamics points towards a tendency for energy to be dispersed. This process of entropy is a move from ordered regularity towards chaos. The moon is therefore subject to degenerative forces. While maintaining enough of its stability in 802,701 to mark out one sense of time and duration through repetitive and predictable spatial movement, these very patterns of movement are subject to the forces of degeneration that permeate the fabric of the material world of *The Time Machine*. Of course this applies to the sun as well, which simultaneously burns with more energy as the earth's planetary orbit decays. These degenerative trajectories find their fully realised forms through the jumps in time made upon leaving 802,701. The landscape of 802,701 can be extended in two ways: one is through the peculiar temporal overlap that constitutes the general subject of this chapter. Each point in time seems to represent a constitutes section of the whole, that can only be mapped, in the Time Traveller's own pseudo-scientific terms, in four dimensions. The other extended dimension is through an

extreme variation of scale, from the microcosmic local, to an immense scale that is able to describe the relative movements and transformations of planetary bodies.

Yet to some extent, this sense of scale is still reducible to Crary's fixed and stable viewpoint, or Bender's notion of landscape rendered as a pictorial field. As he leaves 802,701, the Time Traveller travels faster in time than he has tried before:

As I drove on, a peculiar change crept over the appearance of things. The Palpitating greyness grew darker; then – though I was still travelling with prodigious velocity – the blinking succession of day and night, which was usually indicative of a slower pace, returned, and grew more and more marked. This puzzled me very much at first. The alterations of night and day grew slower and slower, and so did the passage of the sun across the sky, until they seemed to stretch through the centuries. At last a steady twilight brooded over the earth, a twilight only broken now and then when a comet glared across the darkling sky. The band of light that had indicated the sun had long since disappeared; for the sun had ceased to set – it simply rose and fell in the west, and grew ever broader and more red. All trace of the moon had vanished. The circling of the stars, growing slower and slower, had given place to creeping points of light.⁴²⁰

Laid out before him like the spectacle of a planetarium, the entropic degeneration of the Earth and the Solar System are played at a rate where the Time Traveller can detect a marked shift in movement of the landscape at a literally astronomical scale. When making his initial jump at a much slower speed, in which he was able to reach 802,701, the Time Traveller was able to discern the blinking effect of light to dark in the transition of day to night from his fixed perspective. Yet now travelling much faster through time, he is able to see the same effect. This must mean that the time taken for the sun to traverse the sky is increasing as he moves forwards, which translates as the time taken for the earth to spin one revolution on its axis. It is of course his apparently stable and static viewpoint that is turning with each revolution, and not the sun moving. Yet despite the obviousness of such a fact, the illusory relationship of movement and stillness is itself

strangely stable. It really is as if it is the bodies in the sky that move around his viewing position.

The Time Traveller's cinematic apparatus is able to animate a scene of change that is certainly hard to imagine, perhaps impossible to visualise, without such an interpretative technology:

So I travelled, stopping ever and again, in great strides of a thousand years or more, drawn on by the mystery of the earth's fate, watching with a strange fascination the sun grow larger and duller in the westward sky, and the life of the old earth ebb away. At last, more than thirty million years hence, the huge red-hot dome of the sun had come to obscure nearly a tenth part of the darkling heavens.⁴²¹

The scale of this scene is immense, both in terms of spatial terms and temporal. This image of an obese sun as it enters its last stages of life is one that evokes qualities of both the sublime and the uncanny. While the sublime is a term that applies most comfortably to landscape, perhaps the uncanny does not. Nevertheless, Freud's assertion that the uncanny describes an unsettling feeling through the appearance of something familiar, but at the same time repressed, finds some resonance in the image of this last sunset, drawn out over millennia.⁴²² The acknowledged, although historically contingent, theory of the sun's finite life-span emerges through this transformed image of the most familiar and universal of spectacles. This twilight marks not just the end of a day, but of the world itself.

An even more uncanny form of visual spectacle follows in the form of a dramatic eclipse, that leaves the Time Traveller alone in silent darkness upon the beach:

Suddenly I noticed that the circular westward outline of the sun had changed; that a concavity, a bay, had appeared in the curve. I saw this grow larger. For a minute perhaps I stared aghast at this blackness that was creeping over the day, and then I realized that an eclipse was beginning.⁴²³

As with the general presence of bodies in *The Time Machine*, loosely characterised as abhuman, this scene is one of uncertainty. The impression is one of an un-nameable creeping blackness of night that threatens to envelop the day itself. Even after the Time Traveller has identified this encroaching darkness as an eclipse, there remains no sense of certainty in exactly what is taking place:

Either the moon or the planet Mercury was passing across the sun's disk. Naturally, at first I took it to be the moon, but there is much to incline me to believe that what I really saw was the transit of an inner planet passing very near to the earth.⁴²⁴

While assuming that this is the moon, albeit in the guise of the familiar reappearing in the guise of a source of horror, suggesting both confusion and threat, the Time Traveller's uncertainty regarding the situation is such that he cannot be sure. All is unfamiliar, so it is impossible to even distinguish two such distinct astronomical bodies as the moon and Mercury. Their relative positions to the earth can no longer be relied upon as stable.

That the beach and the eclipse might be characterised as sublime seems to be in little doubt, but the nature of how it is sublime and to what extent this is consistent is contestable. Taking Edmund Burke's influential application of the term in the mid-eighteenth century, this scene maintains a sense of sublime distance, while threatening to overstep the division between frightening appearance and genuinely destructive threat:

(...) if pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not conversant around the present destruction of the person, as the emotions clear the parts of a troublesome encumbrance, they are capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror; a sort of tranquillity tinged with terror.⁴²⁵

This account of Burke's certainly conveys something of the perception of the far-future landscape by the Time Traveller as he observes from the safety of his proto-cinematic machine. As the eclipse ends, he is overcome by the sight of the returning sun:

A horror of this great darkness came on me. The cold, that smote to my marrow, and the pain I felt in breathing, overcame me. I shivered, and a deadly nausea seized me. Then like a red-hot bow in the sky appeared the edge of the sun. I got off the machine to recover myself.⁴²⁶

However, as soon as he loses physical contact with the machine, he is overwhelmed. Recognising the grotesque living form 'hopping fitfully about', the Time Traveller feels as if he is fainting, and is overcome by a sense of dread at the idea of lying helpless in 'that remote and awful twilight.' This fear necessitates his remounting of the machine.⁴²⁷ It is not a tranquil or delightful horror, but becomes a consuming sense of vulnerability in the face of this world and its unearthly inhabitants. This encounter seems, for the Time Traveller at least, to go beyond the mild extremities of an aesthetic category, into a realm of horror with an unsustainable bodily impact. Of course, this is reading the scene as a form of visual spectacle laid out before the Time Traveller. Within the text itself, this sequence operates precisely within such a definition of the sublime as a material world created for a reader. It operates in a rather typical manner in that sense, particularly within the genre context of gothic. Danger and threat could be perceived together with knowledge of security. Yet what might distinguish *The Time Machine* from the atypicality of fiction that depicts any form of horror or dread is its predictive, prophetic nature. This is a horror that is tied to inevitability, both socially and biologically, but also in terms of a received understanding of physics.

The landscape of the 'Dead Sea', as the Time Traveller describes it, is framed by its status as a series of composite layers that make up the constitutive space of *The Time Machine*. It depicts an extreme state of distortion of the landscapes of both 802,701 and that of the Time Traveller's own home. Such notions as sublime and uncanny are destabilised, as is the idea of scopical mastery, by the real danger faced by the Time Traveller in his journey. The landscape is one that therefore may be seen to contest its literary and fictional status, through such incompatible contrasts. This reflects the jagged composition of a single textual landscape that comprises of three distinct phases, each of which appears awkward and incompatible. The idea that space and landscape are rendered as a visual technique is one that I would like to argue for and sustain, yet there

are moments of violent rupture to disavow such an assertion. The primacy of bodies within the text, particularly the notion of the Time Traveller as an unstable but nevertheless incontestably embodied subject, bring home a crudely corporeal sense of vulnerability and embeddedness within the accounts of space and landscape.

Upon arriving in 802,701, the Time Traveller is bodily subjected to a thorough drenching in a hail storm, marking his dramatic arrival, offering a dramatic and emergent view of the novel's central motif, and suggesting a kind of rupture in the fabric of time and space marked by this uncharacteristic weather. It also could be seen to serve as a marker of the beginning of a period of relative calm for the Time Traveller. During this period, he explores the new world, encounters its seemingly singular population, and takes in the land and architecture as a primarily visual phenomenon. It is after losing the Time Machine, that this takes a significant turn, returning to that bodily embeddedness and its associative vulnerability. The matter of space and body enter into a renegotiated relationship as equivalent forms of crude materiality. The pictorial impression, discussed earlier, gathered as the Time Traveller 'stood there musing over this too perfect triumph of man' is quickly followed by the calamitous discovery the time machine has vanished from the place where it had arrived:

There was the tangle of rhododendron bushes, black in the pale light, and there was the little lawn. I looked at the lawn again. A queer doubt chilled my complacency. 'No,' said I stoutly to myself, 'that was not the lawn.'⁴²⁸

The interpretative framework of a new world hereto constructed by the Time Traveller, one of accumulative speculation and predominantly visual perception, is thrown into immediate disarray and destructive uncertainty. He cannot conceive that something has befallen his machine, as the implied consequences expose his total vulnerability, as an embodied subject irretrievably lost.

Confusion and uncertainty seem to be in operation as a kind of defence from the implications of such a disappearance. They express disbelief that the Time Traveller's adventure, as a form of scopic mastery, could be so easily undermined, leaving him so vulnerable as a lost and exposed body. That he is lost in but a layer of what constitutes

his own home makes this situation all the more peculiar and disturbing. The panic caused by the machine's disappearance is one that takes on a bodily form, incorporating the Time Traveller into the physical, violently haptic world of 802,701:

At once, like a lash across the face, came the possibility of losing my own age, of being left helpless in this strange new world. The bare thought of it was an actual physical sensation. I could feel it grip me at the throat and stop my breathing. In another moment I was in a passion of fear and running with great leaping strides down the slope. Once I fell headlong and cut my face; I lost no time in staunching the blood, but jumped up and ran on, with a warm trickle down my cheek and chin. All the time I ran I was saying to myself: 'They have moved it a little, pushed it under the bushes out of the way.' Nevertheless, I ran with all my might. All the time, with the certainty that sometimes comes with excessive dread, I knew that such assurance was folly, knew instinctively that the machine was removed out of my reach. My breath came with pain.⁴²⁹

The Time Traveller's presence in the future is now characterised by raw, physical experience and pain, which is indexically tied to the landscape of once distant speculation. The visual is replaced through a violent process of realisation with physicality. This is not just a shift in emphasis to the bodily, but a radical redefinition of the landscape itself, which then becomes definable in terms of this traumatic corporeality. He is cut as the distinction between his stable viewpoint and the space he occupies is ruptured, and his own blood pollutes and dissolves the boundaries as he bleeds. His very breath is both valuable in sustaining his desperate search, and painful to renew.

His own physical abilities seem to change too, in a manner that reflects the processes of unstable bodily becoming, reflecting the argument of the body as a series of potentialities and contingent possibilities, as discussed in Chapter 3: 'I suppose I covered the whole distance from the hill crest to the little lawn, two miles perhaps, in ten minutes. And I am not a young man.'⁴³⁰ Whether this could be interpreted as a matter of the actual dimensions and distances of space seeming to shift within the range of his own traumatic reintegration to this physical, material world, or the abilities of his body being redefined

by the radical nature of formative context, is difficult to judge. I would like to suggest that this moment of trauma and panic suggests a redefinition of both body and landscape that would allow for the co-existence of both readings. Therefore, the space of 802,701 is transformed from a landscape characterised predominantly as visual, to one that is unambiguously material. The Time Traveller changes from a metaphorically disembodied eye, to a subject of materiality, that is bound to, indistinguishably constituted by, the material world in which he finds himself trapped. This shift is one to a kind of atomic equivalence of substance, where matter is what matters.

This violent contrast to the appearance of the future as a visual technique, a moment of rupture or punctum that transforms the landscape of 802,701 into a truly and explicitly material form, contributes to the generation of a characteristic sense of oppositions. This contrast and contradiction is typical of the rich and varied material fabric that constitutes *The Time Machine*. Is this emphasis on the visual apprehension of landscape, as if a form of display or representation, also a marked contrast to the stable and comfortable world of the Time Traveller's home? As suggested already in this chapter the confined space of the present is also one of various conflicts and contradiction, even though mild in comparison to the extreme worlds of the future. Just as these future worlds are exaggerated distortions of the Time Traveller's present, so can they be thought of as material worlds, whose qualities are accumulative upon a temporal trajectory. The chairs, advancements on any design that Morris was capable of, bodily envelop their users. The lighting in the room transforms the scene into one of incandescent radiance, while referring to an all too physical and quotidian realm of technological process in the relative modernity of available services in Richmond, or rather the anachronistic lack of. The sharp oscillations of visual and haptic that occur and become increasingly pronounced as the Time Traveller travels forward, and the sense of a contradictory sense of materiality, only become more extreme versions of those which are played out at home, and the sense demonstration of the model machine likened to an act of conjuring and linked to technologies of visual spectacle is extended to the perceptual account of the journey through time.

The landscape of 802,701 is, as Parrinder argues, dually constituted by its precise dating, through a number that so clearly suggests an entropic and cyclical 'running down'.

The initial impression is one of paradise. This is reflected in the Time Traveller's immediate responses to the Eloi, who possess qualities of fragile beauty. Early descriptive accounts veer towards this position, 'this fragile thing out of futurity', 'these exquisite creatures'.⁴³¹ Above all, this Arcadian paradise initially resembles peaceful security. Yet it is clear from the Time Traveller's first encounters with the Eloi that this is not so, and he makes an intractable connection between the population and their physical environment. Through the eyes of the Time Traveller, this is a land that through its ease and delicacy of nature, that in can generate only weakness. Initially though, there is some in some ways a sustaining of a favourable impression, that suggests both hopeful optimism as well as dire warning:

In the end, wisely and carefully we shall readjust the balance of animal and vegetable life to suit our human needs.

This adjustments, I say, must have been done, and done well: done indeed for all time, in the space of Time across which my machine had leapt. The air was free from gnats, the earth from weeds or fungi; everywhere were fruits and sweet and delightful flowers; brilliant butterflies flew hither and thither. The ideal of preventative medicine was attained. Diseases had been stamped out. And I shall have to tell you later that even the processes of putrefaction and decay had been profoundly affected by these changes.⁴³²

This account describes a world that has been refined through successive and incremental changes. Improvement has effected the landscape, animal life, vegetation, air, even the causes of illness, and more spectacularly, decay and putrefaction have been arrested. However, this is one of the speculative interpretations made by the Time Traveller that are both incomplete, and subsequently inaccurate. The significant absence of more obvious and expected forms of decay have been substituted by the omnipresence of degeneration.

His early speculations, while falling short of his final account of the social reality of this world, suggests quite how tightly bound is the connection between a refined and ideal spatial environment, and the physiognomically rendered Eloi. The Time Traveller is

struck by the lack of distinction between sexes, and the similarity of children to the adults:

Seeing the ease and security in which these people were living, I felt that this close resemblance of the sexes was after all what one would expect; for the strength of a man and the softness of a woman, the institution of the family, and the differentiation of occupations are mere militant necessities of an age of physical force. Where population is balanced and abundant, much child-bearing becomes an evil rather than a blessing to the State; where violence comes but rarely and offspring are secure, there is less necessity – indeed there is no necessity – for an efficient family, and the specialization of the sexes with reference to their children's needs disappears.⁴³³

The refined and progressive appearance of landscape and environment is therefore both the inverse of the condition of bodies, but is, speculatively, part of the very cause of their degenerative status. While the world of 802,701 appears to have been perfected, a veritable triumph, the Time Traveller judges that in fact, the reverse may be implied: 'humanity upon the wane.'⁴³⁴ The landscape, refined through successive 'adjustments' in the manner of Pitt Rivers's views of an increasing sophistication of material artefacts, leads to degeneration in its inhabitants. What the Time Traveller describes as the 'true civilizing process'⁴³⁵ has gone on to a climax, which resulted in its own inversion. The absence of the premium set by security on feebleness, as the Time Traveller describes it, have allowed the Eloi to degenerate, to become feeble. Progress and degeneration, in this speculative scheme of the Time Traveller's are played out in equal measure in the spatial world of 802,701.

These two opposites are not only constituted as simultaneous but incompatible forces, but seem to be conflated as a single principle in the Time Traveller's interpretations of the future. The triumph of spatial environment leads, inevitably, to the decline of its population. The paradoxical appearance of a landscape of apparent perfection, and these creatures who could have had nothing to do with its creation, signposts a gulf between them and their ancestors. Their bodies are both visually

compared and contrasted with the buildings around them. While the size of the built environment, 'those big abundant ruins',⁴³⁶ seems at odds with the delicate frailty of the Eloi, the architecture of 802,701 also reflects their physical beauty:

No doubt the exquisite beauty of the buildings I saw was the outcome of the last surgings of the now purposeless energy of mankind before it settled down into perfect harmony with the conditions under which it lived – the flourish of that triumph which began the last great peace. This has ever been the fate of energy in security; it takes to art and to eroticism, and then comes languor and decay.⁴³⁷

It as if the Eloi are likened to the buildings as also being the product of previous generations, the result of generations of successive labour. And of course, both landscape and population are the descendent outcome of the productive forces of the Time Traveller's own originary present.

In the account given of the journey to 802,701, the rapid appearance of changes to the built environment are one of the visual effects of time travel. Indeed, the change to the whole visible world is dramatic, a melting, amorphous set of transformations:

The landscape was now misty and vague. I was still on the hill-side upon which this house now stands, and the shoulder rose above me grey and dim. I saw trees growing and changing like puffs of vapour, now brown, now green: they grew, spread, shivered, and passed away. I saw huge buildings rise up faint and fair, and pass like dreams. The whole surface of the earth seemed changed - melting and flowing under my eyes.⁴³⁸

It is as if the most reliable sense of concrete materiality is reconfigured, and allowed the possibility of being conceptualised in dimensions other than those of mute and static solidity.

The change in architecture described during temporal transit is picked up by Parrinder, in his assertion that there are two scales of time at play in the year 802,701. There is that which relates to social change, which incorporates architecture, and that of

biological change, which here also includes the general climatic and biological changes in the environment. The Time Traveller notices that after a certain point, there is no sign of seasonal variation. Early on in the journey, at his pace of a year a minute, he describes such a pattern as visible: 'and minute by minute the white snow flashed across the world, and vanished, and was followed by the bright, brief green of spring.'⁴³⁹ Yet as he advances into the future, this cycle is no longer noticeable.

I saw a richer green flow up the hill-side, and remain there without any wintry intermission. Even through the veil of my confusion the earth seemed very fair.⁴⁴⁰

The depth of this time is perhaps, as Parrinder suggests, somewhat out of synch with the scale needed to view the witnessed changes in architectural structures. Nevertheless, it is visible in the age of improved climate, as part of the construction of this new and reconfigured world. These changes in climate are part of the greater forces of progress, with their degenerative connotations, that are responsible for the building and eradication of new and unknown civilizations.

The presence of two timescales is, Parrinder argues, important in that it allows for the recognisable forms of the buildings to stand for contemporary references, and for the overall spatial context to resemble so closely classical forms although set in so far-off a future:

Without the 800-year timescale we cannot easily explain such crucial details as the survival of unmistakably classical forms of architecture into the far future, creating an essentially familiar landscape dominated by the Sphinx and surrounded by ruined palaces and gardens.⁴⁴¹

The Sphinx is, as already discussed, the first thing that the Time Traveller is able to see through the obfuscatory veil brought over the world by the violent storm that marks his dramatic arrival in 802,701. It is dramatically revealed, looming through the hazy downpour. It is not quite a Sphinx, or rather is different to the precise image of a Sphinx, while it retains, without ambiguity, its identity as one: It is described as composed of

white marble, and its shape being 'something like a winged Sphinx', but then consistently refers to it as the 'White Sphinx'. However, the Time Traveller notes a change in the position of the wings: 'instead of being carried vertically at the sides, were spread so that it seemed to hover.'⁴⁴² The differences between this Sphinx and that of the Time Traveller's own era suggest a change, as if in seeing the failure for Victorian humanity to answer its riddle, the White Sphinx demonstrates its triumph, or despair, in the act of spreading its wings. However, 'the faint shadow of a smile on the lips' would seem to suggest the former. From the outset of the Time Traveller's arrival in 802,701, the White Sphinx indicates not only the mere presence of degeneration, but also a very specific warning about a precise social outcome of such forces: that which is grotesquely caricatured/characterised by the physical embodiment of the Eloi and the Morlocks and their social structure, all rendered as mockery of the protagonist/author/reader's present.

There is a perhaps an echo of that embodiment of degenerative, self obsessed, narcissistic decadence, *Des Esseintes*.⁴⁴³ Huysmans' proto-Eloi embarks on a trip from Paris to London, but before leaving the city decides that between his journey thus far, sensory experience and his own solipsistically involved reflections, he is able to consider the trip achieved without leaving his home city. His intended stay in the foreign capital is substituted by an internal, psychic experience, sensually augmented by the early stages of preparation and journey. He returns home to enjoy his trip to London. The Time Traveller realises that in recognizing the social conflict of his own time in the future, he too has not left home.⁴⁴⁴ Social metaphor not only serves to reinforce the idea of the space of the Time Machine as a multifarious but singular conflation, but indeed relies on this very principle in order to function as dramatically within the novel as it does. Space, in this unique configuration, becomes a part of the binding substance of materiality and material culture. This constitutive presence within the novel is one that facilitates both diegetic momentum, and social metaphor.

Not only is the White Sphinx a metaphor for the presence of Thomas Carlyle's polemical social warnings, it is also a site of diegetic significance. It is a consistently important and dramatic location within the driving narrative. It is the image that emerges through the storm of history to greet the Time Traveller upon arrival. It is the site of his desperate flight from 802,701, but is also, upon investigating the disappearance of the

machine, the suspected hiding place of the time machine. Examining the lawn in detail, the Time Traveller suggests that unlike the Eloi, the 'turf gave better counsel', at least suggesting a series of clues and inferring the base of the Sphinx as the point at which all trace of the machine seems to end. Finding a rip in the turf where the machine had overturned upon arrival, he is able to piece together some rudimentary material evidence in the form of traces upon the fabric of the turf itself. These footprints, which indicate through indexical imprints within the substance of the physical landscape the first presence of the Morlocks in the novel, lead to the base of the Sphinx, indicating that it has been taken inside.⁴⁴⁵ The Sphinx becomes an obsession for the Time Traveller. It is his main point of focus, to which all thoughts and plans must return, a riddle written anew for the Time Traveller to solve in the face of the failure of his own society to do just that.

It even seems to set a mocking challenge to him, one that is both spiteful and personally directed. When first reaching the lawn upon which the machine had materialised, which of course occupies the same space as his own home, the White Sphinx compounds his distraught condition:

Above me towered the Sphinx, upon the bronze pedestal, white, shining, leprous, in the light of the rising moon. It seemed to smile in mockery of my dismay.⁴⁴⁶

This infuriating act of smiling, suggesting not benevolence but rather the powerless insignificance of the Time Traveller, is reflected to uncanny effect by the faces of the Eloi. Their smiles and laughter, although innocent are those of the Sphinx.⁴⁴⁷ They both resemble that mocking face that looked down upon the Time Traveller and embody a symptomatic cause of humanity's descent into this age of apparent foolishness. Even though the Time Traveller is at this point yet to realise the extent of the inversion of his present day society, the playful incomprehension of the Eloi, which I would like to suggest is bound to the smile of the White Sphinx, is all that is left of the qualities of decadence and social blindness that have allowed this transformation of both the social and the biological.

The obsessive need to solve the Sphinx's new riddle leads to the Time Traveller setting out upon an investigation of this world, and the role and nature of this White

Sphinx in particular. From the moment he traces the mysterious footprints to its pedestal, it becomes the focus of detailed scrutiny. When first seeing the Sphinx, he describes the lower part of the structure: 'The pedestal, it appeared to me, was of bronze, and was thick with verdigris.'⁴⁴⁸ The bronze shows signs of ageing, as verdigris alludes to some kind of encrustation upon its surface, or of a richly developed patina, brought about through oxidation. Yet this is ageing that would hardly require the temporal distances of biological change, but rather seems to suggest a social, historical timescale. The material of the pedestal's construction is confirmed upon following the Morlock tracks the led from the site of the disappeared time machine. The discovery of the tracks:

(...) directed my closer attention to the pedestal. It was, as I think I have said, of bronze. It was not a mere block, but highly decorated with deep framed panels on either side. I went and rapped at these. The pedestal was hollow. Examining the panels with care I found them discontinuous with the frames. There were no handles or keyholes, but possibly the panels, if they were doors, as I supposed, opened from within. One thing was clear enough to my mind. It took no very great mental effort to infer that my Time Machine was inside that pedestal. But how to get in there was a different problem.⁴⁴⁹

Thus the conditions of the Sphinx's new riddle are set, one that defines the sensationalist diegetic arc of the novel, and one that flows as a parallel to Carlyle's, albeit as a question that has at stake but one life, rather than that of an entire culture. If the Time Traveller cannot resolve this problem of how to get inside this interior zone, he will not have the power or agency to recover his machine.

The Sphinx indicates a space outside of sight or accessibility for the Time Traveller. The hollowness of the pedestal describes a negative space within, a cut into the material reality of 802,701 as the Time Traveller is able to conceive of it and interact within it. This discovery of a mysterious void within this world also appears to the Time Traveller to have a substantial but unaccountable social status, as he finds out almost immediately after discovering the pedestal to be hollow. Upon seeing some of the Eloi approach, he attempts to enlist their help in his endeavours. The Eloi are part of the

landscape. They are 'orange-clad' amongst apple-trees, which are themselves 'blossom-covered'.⁴⁵⁰ This language suggests a relativity between these elements, and a sense that there is no inconsistency between them, indeed almost a degree of interchangeability in the connections between fruit, colour and foliage in this description of these Eloi. Their sense of harmony in the landscape is contrasted with their apparent disgust at the Time Traveller's suggestion that they assist him in gaining access to the pedestal interior. The insult seems to be in part the transgression of the world from which they are indistinguishable, to a space of incontrovertible alterity and taboo.

Despite the reaction that he has had to his attempts to gather help to gain access to this interior zone, the Time Traveller asks another for help. This time round, the Eloi is not compared to the spatial landscape of their world, but to the apparent disposition that favourably characterises their banal indifference:

I tried a sweet-looking little chap in white next, with exactly the same result. Somehow, his manner made me feel ashamed of myself. But, as you know, I wanted the Time Machine, and I tried him once more. As he turned off, like the others, my temper got the better of me. In three strides I was after him, had him by the loose part of his robe round the neck, and began dragging him towards the Sphinx. Then I saw the horror and repugnance of his face, and all of a sudden I let him go.⁴⁵¹

This example is not, as before, of an incompatible contrast of inside and out, but of the nature of character in the Eloi and Time Traveller, and of the emergent tendencies within the Time Traveller that are in a process of becoming due to the absence of reiterative and normative forms of social context. The Sphinx is, perhaps, a catalyst in the initial of the Time Traveller's embodied descent from an apparent condition of stability.

Indeed, the pedestal of the White Sphinx almost immediately transforms the Time Traveller into a being of violence, at least of sorts, first fruitlessly banging his fists upon its panels, then with a large pebble.⁴⁵² This is a raw, almost brutal, form of interaction, an act of initiation for the Time Traveller as he is transformed by this spatial environment from one imagined form of late Victorian subject, philosophically speculative and adept

at technological invention, to something resembling a two-fisted adventurer with a lust for the satisfactory and immediate results of action. The latter could be seen as a consistent and necessary undercurrent of Imperial masculinity, brought into the forefront by the Time Traveller's displacement. However, as he starts to pound upon the metal of the pedestal, the futility of his nineteenth century physiology and direct approach is demonstrated in dual fashion. He both hears, or at least seems to hear, mocking laughter inside, and achieves nothing more than the destruction of some of the formal details of the bronze. There is also a suggestion of regression in his actions, which is simultaneously a sign of the Time Traveller's innate ability, as *Homo Sapiens* rather than *Eloi*, for the use of tools. While inventive enough to use a pebble as a crude hammer, perhaps this suggests the evolutionary scheme exemplified and refined by Pitt Rivers. The artefacts and tools of the most chronologically distant and technologically primitive will be those that most resemble an unaltered state as natural forms, such as a pebble. The Time Traveller, while displaying more ingenuity and ambition than any *Eloi*, is also nothing more than a primitive savage.

Parrinder emphasises the familiarity of the landscape of 802,701, overseen by the recognisable form of the White Sphinx. The survival of this structure and the neo-classical environment suggests a timescale that is social and historical, relating to Parrinder's figure of an 800 year distance from the Time Traveller's own present. In addition to Parrinder's commentary on the presence of ruined palaces and gardens, I would like to suggest that the general landscape and architecture resembles that of the Crystal Palace. This is not just in reference to the connections drawn out in the previous chapter between the Palace of Green Porcelain, and the rebuilt Crystal Palace itself, but rather a suggested overlaying of the entire spatial zone of 802,701 onto the larger site of the building's extensive grounds. It is worth noting, for example, that one of the few remains present among the ruins of the present-day Crystal Palace are a pair of Sphinxes either side of a staircase along one edge of the terraces that once formed the space in front of the building. Today, the hieroglyphics inscribed upon their sides are but palimpsests, forming strata beneath other forms of pictorial writing. Graffiti is applied and erased upon their bodies, perhaps in answer or defiance to the legacy of their one-time significance of symbol of prophetic foreboding.

As well as evoking the already declining grandeur of the Crystal Palace, and its narratives of progress, leisure, education and distraction, the landscape and architecture of 802,701 refers to a visual tradition that encompasses visual art and notions of ownership and power as traditionally English forms of authoritative meaning. They also, like the chairs in the Time Traveller's home, evoke alternative models of socially minded speculative fiction:

The palaces and gardens suggest the landscape of neoclassical paintings and country houses, while alluding to a line of English utopian romances which would have been fresh in the minds of Wells's first readers: Richard Jefferies' *After London* (1885), W.H. Hudson's *A Crystal Age* (1887), and, above all, William Morris's *News from Nowhere* (1890). Morris's death in 1896 drew an affectionate if patronising acknowledgement in the *Saturday Review* – 'His dreamland was no futurity, but an illuminated past', Wells wrote.⁴⁵³

Again, like the chairs in the Time Traveller's home, there can be found a specific reference to Morris in *The Time Machine*. 802,701 at first seems like a future utopia, yet is proved to be an argument for its impossibility:

The Time Machine is both an explicitly anti-utopian text, and one which deliberately recalls *News from Nowhere* at a number of points. Morris's pastoral, idyllic society is centred on Hammersmith in West London, while the society of the Eloi is centred two or three miles upstream at Richmond. Both are placed in a lush parkland replacing the nineteenth-century industrial and suburban sprawl beside the River Thames. The Eloi, like the inhabitants of Nowhere and of most other contemporary socialist utopias, eat together in communal dining halls. William Guest, Morris's 'time traveller', learns about the history of twentieth- and twenty-first century England from an old man at the British Museum, while Wells's Traveller journeys to the Palace of Green Porcelain, an abandoned old museum of the arts and sciences modelled on the Crystal Palace and the South Kensington Museum. On the evening of his first day with the Eloi, the Traveller

climbs to a hilltop, surveys the countryside and exclaims 'Communism' to himself. The Communism he has in mind must be the pastoral utopia of Morris and Thomas More, rather than the revolutionary industrial society of Marx and Saint-Simon.⁴⁵⁴

I would like to suggest that both this all encompassing landscape, and individual pieces of domestic furniture, allude to the same point of reference. This accumulation upon a single point further erases any sense of clearly demarcated boundary between the various spaces and eras of *The Time Machine*. Instead, there is a suggested equivalence of materiality, and a sense of which both landscape and artefact are accessibly conceptualised as forms of material culture.

The other buildings that the Time Traveller has any substantial interactions with are those described as palace-like.

Looking round with a sudden thought, from a terrace on which I rested for a while, I realized that there were no small houses to be seen. Apparently the single house, and possibly even the household, had vanished. Here and there and there among the greenery were palace-like buildings, but the house and the cottage, which form such characteristic features of our own English landscape, had disappeared.⁴⁵⁵

This view is also suggestive of the Crystal Palace, its landscape made up of terraces overlooking its grounds and the rural borders of South London. It is a fantasy of what such a view might suggest, the absence of all other signs of domestic dwelling that in reality surrounded the site, but which would have been largely invisible from such a perspective. It is this view that leads the Time Traveller to mistakenly speculate that this future world was one that had adopted communism, as envisioned by Morris. This is in fact the second appearance of the term in the novel. The first comes in the discussion at the Time Traveller's home about the possibilities of time travel:

‘Then there is the future,’ said the Very Young Man. ‘Just think! One might invest all one’s money, leave it to accumulate at interest, and hurry on ahead!’

‘To discover a society,’ said I, erected on a strictly communistic basis.’⁴⁵⁶

However, this observation comes not from the character representing Morris, a quiet, shy man with a beard who seems to say nothing all evening, but from the outer narrator, Hillyer. His suggestion stays with the Time Traveller to the extent that he makes such a profound misinterpretation of the social structure of this future landscape. Yet there is still folly in the suggestion that the social and architectural forms of the future might indeed represent some form of Morris-inspired communism. Hillyer's comment follows on from this other observation based on greed, exploiting time travel as a means of accumulating wealth. This short-sighted self interest is symptomatic of the causes of humanity's division and ultimate downfall.

The appearance of a communist future in the Time Traveller's view over the landscape is compounded by the striking physical similarity of the Eloi. He does not notice this peculiarity until making the mistaken speculative judgement that this is indeed a form of communist society.⁴⁵⁷ Again, this is suggestive of the degree to which the Eloi and their spatial environment are one. They are undifferentiated from each other, as they are undifferentiated from the landscape and architecture of 802,701:

In costume, and in all the differences of texture and bearing that now mark off the sexes from each other, these people of the future were alike. And the children seemed to my eyes to be but the miniatures of their parents.⁴⁵⁸

The qualities of texture and bearing, strangely material, unify rather than distinguish them from each other. These terms seem formal, decorative, and oddly architectural. Just as the children are miniatures of the parents, so the Eloi are perhaps miniatures of the landscape. This relationship is not, however, one that is characterised by a straightforward tone of homogeneity. There is also a sense of sharp contrast between the refined climate, crafted landscape and impressive grandeur of the built environment. This is at the same time not their world, and yet one that they are bound to, to the point of which there is no way of

differentiating them from it. That such a seemingly irrevocable discontinuity is possible is due to their alterity, their distance from humanity as the Time Traveller understands it.

This apparent paradox that I've suggested might be made less opaque through an emphasis on a specificity of form. The 'too perfect triumph' of the future world relates to both, but is shown in radically different ways, and suggests a sense of temporal depth. I have already discussed the contrast between the Eloi and their environment earlier in this chapter. The 'physical slightness' of the Eloi is opposed to the scale of 'those big abundant ruins'. There is, as I have said, a gulf between population and environment. This is a temporal gulf. The Eloi did not build the structures, or tame the land, but rather are like the spatial environment, a product of a long term historical change. This is the root of their equivalence with, as well as difference to, the space of 802,701.

Such forms of contrasting equivalence dominate this landscape. There are also mysterious hints early on that there are ruptures in the apparent ease and comfort of things, albeit as a most decadent paradise. After first speculating about the relationships between the degenerate bodies of the Eloi and the signs of splendour in the land, climate and architecture, the Time Traveller finds some anomalous architectural features:

While I was musing upon these things, my attention was attracted by a pretty little structure, like a well under a cupola. I thought in a transitory way of the oddness of wells still existing, and then resumed the thread of my speculations.⁴⁵⁹

This is made all the more unsettling through this initial interpretation of the well, leading to the interior world of the Morlocks, as a 'pretty little structure'. It seems at first like a decorative folly, but is ultimately viewed as a well, which makes no sense in a culture that is apparently one of technological sophistication and an absence of any form of labour, such as needing to manually draw water from a well. This discovery also carries with it another anomalous significance. Parrinder interprets this as a possible reflection on the creative difficulties that lay behind the writing of *The Time Machine*:

For six years (1888-94), we may say, Wells, had hesitated on the brink of a genuinely prophetic narrative. His exultation once he had succeeded in giving the

future a body and shape is perhaps mirrored in the pun (supposing it is a pun) in Section 4 of *The Time Machine*, when the Traveller reflects on the 'oddness of wells still existing'.⁴⁶⁰

The strangeness of this peculiar well, part solid structure, part cut into the landscape, is passed over for a while as he finds another vantage point with which to survey the pictorial world of the future. The interpretations of this world depend so much upon such moments in the novel, as a fixed observer making sense of a visual arrangement. This early overview makes use of a particular device that helps to bind the spaces of the novel within the pictorial scene - a chair upon which the Time Traveller sits to survey the outlook:

There I found a seat of some yellow metal that I did not recognize, corroded in places with a kind of pinkish rust and half smothered in soft moss, the armrests cast and filed into the resemblance of griffins' heads. I sat down on it, and I surveyed the broad view of our world under the sunset of that long day. It was as sweet and fair a view as I have ever seen.⁴⁶¹

Despite its mysterious composition, being made from an unknown metal, the chair is a peculiar reappearance of that most quotidian of objects. It seems to have been placed here for precisely that sense of scopic mastery that Bender describes as a dominant aspect of both landscape and its visual representation. It suggests control, ownership, overview, a point with which to construct both a stable notion of self and a coherent historical and visual construct of this 'too perfect triumph'. It also suggests Baudrillard's idea of private telematics. The Time Traveller is placed in an illusory position of control, as if operating a hypothetical machine, isolated in a position of perfect and remote sovereignty, and, importantly, at an infinite distance from his universe of origin. The chair is both alien and familiar, a specific device in this alien environment, and a recurrence of both the chairs from the Time Traveller's own home, and also perhaps the time machine itself.

The pictorial view gained from this hilltop throne, with armrests shaped in classical reference, is one that is both memorable and formative in the constitution of the spatial environment of 802,701:

The sun had already gone down below the horizon and the west was flaming gold, touched with some horizontal bars of purple and crimson. Below was the valley of the Thames, in which the river lay like a band of burnished steel. I have already spoken of the great palaces dotted about among the variegated greenery, some in ruins and some still occupied. Here and there rose a white or silvery figure in the waste garden of the earth, here and there came the sharp vertical line of some cupola or obelisk. There were no hedges, no signs of proprietary rights, no evidences of agriculture; the whole earth had become a garden.⁴⁶²

In the true spirit of an internalised sense of Empire and Colonial expansion, the Time Traveller makes up for the lack of any evidence of proprietary rights in the landscape by attempting to impose his own scopic ownership upon the scene. He does so as interpreter, observer and owner. This is, after all, a vastly expanded extension of his own privately owned home. That this overseen view is a dramatic sunset seems to play no small part in the subsequent interpretative suggestion made by the Time Traveller, as he himself makes explicit in the description of this scene as the sunset of mankind.

The Time Traveller goes on to develop the analogy that the earth has become a garden in his extrapolation of this world as the consequence of 'the social effort in which we are at present engaged',⁴⁶³ where in the absence of strength-breeding need an excess of security encourages and values only feebleness:

One triumph of a united humanity over Nature had followed another. Things that are now mere dreams had become projects deliberately put in hand and carried forward. And the harvest was what I saw!⁴⁶⁴

This harvest is both landscape and population. It is a point at which, despite sharp contrasts, the Eloi and their environment are indistinguishable, embodied subjects bound to spatial and material and social context.

Just as principles of successive change, at once suggestive of both progressive evolution and regressive degeneration, have shaped the bodies and social structures of humanity's descendants in the future, so have similar forces shaped the land and environment of 802,701. Not only does the Time Traveller speculate upon modifications to landscape in his interpretation of this view, but also discusses disease:

After all, the sanitation and the agriculture of to-day are still in the rudimentary stage. The science of our time has attacked but a little department of the field of human disease, but, even so, it spreads its operations very steadily and persistently. Our agriculture and horticulture destroy a weed just here and there and cultivate perhaps a score or so of wholesome plants, leaving the greater number to fight out a balance as they can. We improve our favourite plants and animals - and how few they are - gradually by selective breeding; now a new and better peach, now a seedless grape, now a sweeter and larger flower, now a more convenient breed of cattle.⁴⁶⁵

Sanitation and agriculture expand the body into the landscape. Circulatory systems that regulate health are expanded as solidified cosmologies within the landscape. Their refinement and apparent perfection are embodied within the corporeal forms of the Eloi, immune to both hunger and disease. Yet in truth they are little more than genetically modified cattle, one of those favourite animals that has been improved.

The buildings or built structures visible in this twilight scene are limited to obelisks, cupolas - possibly like the well the Time Traveller described, or 'great palaces'. The simplicity of the built environment is part of the appearance of a too perfect triumph, of humanity's decadent success. Just as the air is free of gnats, populated instead by pretty butterflies, and the earth is free of weeds, instead abundant with fruit, there is no sign of disease or even decay. This finds its analogy in the material evidence of a social triumph, referring to the built environment:

I saw mankind housed in splendid shelters, gloriously clothed, and as yet, I had found them engaged in no toil. There were no signs of struggle, neither social nor economical struggle. The shop, the advertisement, traffic, all that commerce which constitutes the body of our world, was gone.⁴⁶⁶

The world of the Time Traveller has a body, constituted by capital as it is translated into a visible and material medium. Yet this body is one of alterity, of social triumph as ultimate failure. The building type categorised as both 'splendid shelters' and 'great palaces' are already familiar to the Time Traveller. He first enters one immediately after he first encounters the Eloi who greet him following his arrival, and who nearly cover him in flowers, throwing them at him until he is almost smothered in blossom:

Then some one suggested that their plaything should be exhibited in the nearest building, and so I was led past the Sphinx of white marble, which had seemed to watch me all the while with a smile at my astonishment, towards a vast grey edifice of fretted stone.⁴⁶⁷

In bringing together the behaviour of the Eloi with the imposing exterior of this building, with its suggestion of intricate surfaces. Environment and population are rendered as opposing elements. The building is big, grey, imposing, serious, well crafted with patterns that suggest tradition and cultural, perhaps cosmological, significance. This is a point of contradiction and contrast in the overall fabric of body and space as it is woven through *The Time Machine*. The fretted surface is suggestive of classical architecture, suggesting an ornamental pattern of horizontal and vertical lines requiring great skill, patience and strength to produce, qualities all lacking in the trivially playful Eloi.

Upon entering it, the Time Traveller emphasises the scale of this building, and again, there is a clearly defined contrast made between architecture and the physical bearing of its inhabitants:

The building had a huge entry, and was altogether of colossal dimensions. I was naturally most occupied with the growing crowd of little people, and with the big open portals that yawned before me, shadowy and mysterious.⁴⁶⁸

There is a hint, in these big open portals, of the horror of interior space, as it is to be manifested later as the landscape of 802,701 unfolds further to encompass not only the appearance of decadent triumph, but the subterranean and shadowy realm of the Morlocks. This is not to be realised in this vast palace, however. Rather, the sense of interior and exterior suggested by these portals is illusory and misleading. Instead, there is a building in which the distinctions between outside and in seem to be less than stable:

My general impression of the world I saw over their heads was of a tangled waste of beautiful bushes and flowers, a long-neglected and yet weedless garden. I saw a number of tall spikes of strange white flowers, measuring a foot perhaps across the spread of waxen petals.⁴⁶⁹

The too-perfect foliage of the outside landscape has come to dominate the architectural space of the entrance. However, the forms of this fauna seem strangely architectural in themselves. While the building has in a sense opened itself up to the world outside, these plants themselves take on qualities of architecture. This is not, therefore, a straightforward rupturing of boundaries, but a profound interrogation of their very possibility in the material world of *The Time Machine*.

The thoughts of the Time Traveller are also elsewhere, linking him to the outside of the building. He refrains from examining these structural plants in detail, as he is still bound by preoccupied concern to the lawn on which he arrived:

They grew scattered, as if wild, among the variegated shrubs, but, as I say, I did not examine them closely at this time. The Time Machine was left deserted on the turf among the rhododendrons.⁴⁷⁰

The mysterious plants inside are arranged against the ones that surround the machine, which he is able to name with quotidian familiarity. As he passes through the doorway into the interior of the building, the carvings around the entrance are damaged through decay, neglect and perhaps vandalism. Weather worn,⁴⁷¹ this entrance is polluted by the exterior environment. The entrance is also used as a point of contrast between the Eloi and their communal space. Their tiny bodies are lost in 'a melodious whirl of laughter and laughing speech'⁴⁷² that seems to defy the age and scale of this ruin.

The interior is not sealed, nor is it flooded with radiant sunlight.⁴⁷³ It is not pure. Rather it comes through windows that are either open to the outside, or still retain coloured glass that taints and pollutes the sun. This quality of light determines the overall impression that the Time Traveller makes of this space:

And perhaps the thing that struck me the most was its dilapidated look. The stained-glass windows, which displayed only a geometrical pattern, were broken in many places, and the curtains that hung across the lower end were thick with dust. And it caught my eye that the corner of the marble table near me was fractured. Nevertheless, the general effect was extremely rich and picturesque.⁴⁷⁴

The picturesque effect is suggestive of both a gothic taste for ruins, structures which are unable to maintain boundaries of interior and exterior, and a mirroring of the exterior scenes of pictorial landscape.

The details of the inside of this building are described not only in terms of elements of recognisable familiarity, but also a sustained sense of alterity. These pronounced oddities are indications of civilizations that are not that of the Time Traveller, or those that preceded his own. There is both analogy and strangeness, allowing for comparison and differentiation.

The floor was made up of huge blocks of some very hard white metal, not plates nor slabs - blocks, and it was so much worn, as I judged by the going to and fro of past generations, as to be deeply channelled along the more frequented ways.⁴⁷⁵

This material allows for the destructive and indexical presence of the bodies of the Eloi upon this interior space, suggesting their repetitive routines over a prolonged duration. One of the most striking and perhaps significant differences is one that relates to an ongoing thematic appearance of domestic material culture - the chair.

Traverse to the length were innumerable tables made of slabs of polished stone, raised, perhaps a foot from the floor and upon these were heaps of fruits (...)
Between the tables was scattered a great number of cushions.⁴⁷⁶

These cushions and long tables are the sites of communal meals of unknown varieties of fruit. This is a proposed material and social reality of a social utopia, which in his initial misinterpretation, the Time Traveller takes this as a failed example of, and around which, the chairs in the Time Traveller's home had suggested a discursive role. The absence of chairs in these interior spaces is perhaps suggestive of the end of such hopeful aspirations.

This building takes on an additional dimension when the Time Traveller returns later that night. He has just made the traumatic discovery that his machine has gone, and all is now different, dominated by physical sensations and a new found bodily vulnerability within this alien environment. Even the White Sphinx has taken on a new appearance and aspect in the light of the empty space where the machine should be, appearing as shining white, leprous and seeming to smile in mockery at the Time Traveller's dismay. It is difficult to envisage this face that is both shining and white, as well as somehow discoloured or disfigured to the extent that it could be described as leprous. Nevertheless, it signals a transformation of the Time Traveller's situation, his bodily condition, and the subjectively rendered spatial environment. In a state of frenzy, he returns to the ruined palace:

The big hall was dark, silent, and deserted. I slipped on the uneven floor, and fell over one of the malachite tables, almost breaking my shin.⁴⁷⁷

The floor and tables describe earlier now become hindrances, even causes of physical injury, to the Time Traveller in this state. Both he and this interior space have entered into a new state.

By night, which metaphorically mirrors the change in the Time Traveller's physical and psychic predicament, the building is changed in as much as he is able to encounter it. Stability and certainty are severely eroded in this change. This shift is one that is more accurate in its colouring of the Time Traveller's impressions, and the presence of the built environment in *The Time Machine*. The living palaces, as the Time Traveller describes them, are significant in his speculative analysis of this future world. That all the buildings he encounters on the surface, with the exception of the Palace of Green Porcelain, are set aside for eating, sleeping and leisure, is something of a conundrum. He can find no evidence of machinery or appliances of production:

Yet these people were clothed in pleasant fabrics that must at times need renewal, and their sandals, though undecorated, were fairly complex specimens of metalwork. Somehow such things must be made. And the little people displayed no vestige of a creative tendency. There were no shops, no workshops, no sign of importations among them.⁴⁷⁸

That there is no indication of any structures or machinery that might account for the sophistication of these material artefacts is reflected in the visible patterns of behaviour that the Time Traveller is able to observe amongst the Eloi. They appear to spend all their time engaged in playing, bathing, eating fruit or 'making love in a half-playful fashion'.⁴⁷⁹ It is impossible for the Time Traveller to make sense of this order of things, or of how it can be sustained.

This state of confusion is shortlived, in that it changes upon degrees of evidence and complexity of speculation, but ultimately is never fully resolved. He describes his confusion in two interesting ways. The first is through analogy. While confessing to a broad ignorance of many practical details of his own society, such as drains and modes of conveyance, the Time Traveller provides a comparison of his experience of 802,701, as

one that would be even more alien than the experience of an African, who had never left home, finding themselves in London:

In some of these visions of Utopias and coming times which I have read, there is a vast amount of detail about building, and social arrangements, and so forth. But while such details are easy enough to obtain when the whole world is contained in one's imagination, they are altogether inaccessible to a real traveller amid such realities as I found here. Conceive the tale of London which a negro, fresh from Central Africa, would take back to his tribe! What would he know of railway companies, of social movements, of telephone and telegraph wires, of the Parcels Delivery Company, and postal orders and the like? Yet we, at least, should be willing enough to explain these things to him!⁴⁸⁰

In part, this vagueness could be interpreted as a practical necessity. In this way, it is an extension of the understanding of the time machine as something that must be elusive in descriptive detail, as it cannot be overly determined and retain its fantastical credibility.

Yet it is also the qualitative connotation of this analogy that stands out as significant, that this is a world that through its distance and alterity can never be fully known or understood. It resists certainty of definition through its very nature as one that is ultimately divorced from the means to describe it adequately. It is too far distant from frameworks of interpretative knowledge that the Time Traveller might be able to wrap around it. In continuing his analogy, the Time Traveller suggests that even if what this hypothetical observer from Africa were to have the sights before him explained, it would be inconceivably alien to his untravelled friend: 'Then, think how narrow the gap between a negro and a white man of our own times, and how wide the interval between myself and these of the Golden Age!' ⁴⁸¹ The other summary of his confusion is given through another analogy, this time with the form and structure of text and its relationships to meaning and sense:

I felt I lacked a clue. I felt – how shall I put it? Suppose you found an inscription, with sentences here, and there in excellent plain English, and interpolated

therewith, others made up of words, of letters even, absolutely unknown to you?⁴⁸²

This account of incomplete and fragmentary text can be read as more wide ranging in its implications, beyond the analogy with the extreme alterity of the world discovered by the Time Traveller. Rather, it can be used to shed some light on the novel and its current interpretation as a material world. Wells is providing a concrete analogy of the material world of 802,701, with text. Perhaps in this description is encoded something of both the very interpretative methodology which is applied to the novel through this very specific reading, and simultaneously, the suggested presence of textual manifestations of material culture that the novel itself produces.

The Time Traveller, through the presence of air currents and sounds that suggested the workings of industrial scale machinery,⁴⁸³ associates the odd wells with tall towers that punctuate the landscape. Above these towers can be seen an effect of flickering motion, similar to that visible on a hot day above the surface of a beach. The wells and towers are, he concludes during the early part of his visit, possibly part of a huge system of underground ventilation. He is able to briefly sustain this misguided interpretation both through the ignorance of what such a system might actually be used for in this environment, and through the ignorance of such structures and services within his own temporal and geographic context. His journey towards a greater degree of enlightenment on the matter takes place at a point of stark contrast between the world of light on the surface, the world of the Eloi, and the darkness below hinted at by the great shafts that penetrate the landscape. On what he estimates as his fourth morning in this era, the Time Traveller seeks shelter from the heat that characterises the climate of futurity in the shade of 'colossal ruin' not far from the great hall in which he and the Eloi sleep and eat:

Clambering among these heaps of masonry, I found a narrow gallery, whose end and side windows were blocked by fallen masses of stone. By contrast with the brilliancy outside, it seemed at first impenetrably dark to me.⁴⁸⁴

Despite the brilliant sunlight that bathes the daylight world, within it is this gallery of shadows, the very darkness of which suggests a negative cut of space within space, the intervention of one zone into another.

This is more than a division between two distinct areas, one light and one dark. Rather it suggests the complex spatial modelling in *The Time Machine* as one of folds and simultaneities, as well as contrasts. Entering into this space has a disorientating effect on the Time Traveller: 'I entered it groping, for the change from light to blackness made spots of colour swim before me.'⁴⁸⁵ Uncertainty manifests itself as a form of temporary blindness and visual confusion, marking the transgression of an unstable and permeable boundary. It is within this space of confusion that the Time Traveller encounters a Morlock at close range for the first time. Yet he is not greeted by another corporeal, embodied subject, or even a fully constituted animal. Rather he is confronted by a pair of eyes watching out of the darkness. The Time Traveller is rooted to the spot, filled with animalistic dread as if a hunted beast, by nothing but a pair of 'glaring eyeballs'. The eyes appear to glow, as if generating their own source of illumination, but actually reflect the bright sunlight from outside. This space is made not only analogous to, but materially implicated in, the degenerate erasure of humanity as a stable embodied subject. The abhuman qualities of the predatory Morlock as it spies upon the Time Traveller are fused with this darkened cut in the landscape.

This pair of eyes, embodied within the formless dark, offers a clue as to the textual riddle of this landscape. The Time Traveller has observed within the apparent security of the world of the Eloi a conspicuous terror regarding their attitude towards the dark. In order to pursue this line of investigation, he speaks and reaches out into the darkness with his hand, overcoming his own terror to do so. As he does so, the eyes can be seen darting to one side, and he sees a Morlock run across the sunlit space behind him and disappear inside the shadows formed beneath some ruined masonry. Following the ape-like creature into the shadows, the Time Traveller is unable to find it again, but does come across another of the openings that he thought of as wells, half hidden beneath a collapsed pillar. This leads him to consider the possibility that the creature might have vanished into the shaft:

I lit a match, and, looking down, I saw a small, white moving creature, with large bright eyes which regarded me steadfastly as it retreated. It made me shudder. It was so like a human spider! It was clambering down the wall, and now I saw for the first time a number of metal foot- and hand-rests forming a kind of ladder down the shaft. Then the light burned my fingers and fell out of my hand, going out as it dropped, and when I had lit another the little monster had disappeared.⁴⁸⁶

This sight is enough to lead the Time Traveller to a new understanding of the conditions of this spatial environment as a social order. He deduces that humanity was not present as a single species, but as two. An answer to the economic impossibilities of this age is suggested after thinking of the system of ventilation he had described earlier.

The features of this degenerate heir of humanity suggest a subterranean existence, its bleached look suggestive of animals that live in the dark, its large reflective eyes common to nocturnal creatures. Its physiology has been shaped by successive generations living away from the sunlit world of the surface. The Time Traveller guesses that beneath his feet must lie a tunnelled habitat, as extensive as the range of ubiquitous shafts that were present in all the terrain he had surveyed. Although falling short of the final realisations of their relationship, he likens this situation as one that proceeds from the problematic conditions of his own age, specifically concerning the social difference between Capitalist and Labourer:

There is a tendency to utilize underground space for the less ornamental purposes of civilization; there is the Metropolitan Railway in London, for instance, there are new electric railways, there are subways, there are underground workrooms and restaurants, and they increase and multiply. Evidently, I thought, this tendency had increased till Industry had gradually lost its birthright in the sky. I mean that it had gone deeper and deeper into larger and ever larger underground factories, spending a still increasing amount of time therein, till, in the end - ! Even now, does not an East End worker live in such artificial conditions as practically to be cut off from the natural surface of the earth?⁴⁸⁷

In this he maps out the modern city according the lines of division that define the exaggerated emphasis of 802,701. This is an extreme form of both habitus and distinction as described by Bourdieu. Architectural space, matching the distortions of the body, acts as a literal manifestation of habitus as an unconscious set of dispositions that structures social interaction and behaviour, and this differentiation of spatial environment serves to separate the Morlocks and keep them distinct from the Eloi. However, their common ancestry implies the impossibility of sustaining any concrete distinction between them, a fact that increases the horrific effect within the narrative of their cannibalism.

The dark world of the Morlocks is one that is impassable to the Eloi. To even approach its boundary is a cause of debilitating fear. In order to acquire a better understanding of this world, and primarily to further his cause of recovering his machine, the Time Traveller must transgress this most fundamental of Eloi taboos. He enters it by climbing down the rungs that line the interiors of the well-like shafts that penetrate the dividing ground between the two worlds. As he descends into the profoundly dark world of the Morlocks, the sounds of machinery that he had heard earlier increase incrementally, growing louder and more oppressive, as the aperture through which he entered becomes but a little disk of light in the gloom. The sound of machinery grows even louder as the Time Traveller moves along a tunnel leading from the shaft:

Presently the walls fell away from me, and I came to a large open space, and, striking another match, saw that I had entered a vast arched cavern, which stretched into utter darkness beyond the range of my light. The view I had of it was as much as one could see in the burning of a match.⁴⁸⁸

The space of the darkness is one that is defined by the illumination of a match, shaped by the rudimentary light source, defined as a material form by the smallest of flame, as an indistinct and unstable apparition. The weakness of appearance is matched by an insufficiency of memory:

Necessarily my memory is vague. Great shapes like big machines rose out of the dimness, and cast grotesque black shadows, in which dim spectral Morlocks

sheltered from the glare. The place, by the by, was very stuffy and oppressive, and the faint halitus freshly shed blood was in the air.⁴⁸⁹

The textual presence of the Morlocks' environment resists accurate constitution, as the Time Traveller is unable to mnemonically constitute it in any detail. It is instead rendered as an environment of uncertainty.

A photographic record of this Under-world, as the Time Traveller describes it, would have partially addressed this problem and rendered it in the harsh light of clear and unambiguous certainty: 'If only I had thought of a Kodak! I could have flashed that glimpse of the Under-world in a second, and examined it at leisure.'⁴⁹⁰ Yet there is a definite and clear resistance to this possibility. Wells has given us an explorer who was singularly unprepared for his expedition. He brings nothing with him in terms of supplies or equipment:

I have thought since how particularly ill-equipped I was for such an experience. When I had started with the Time Machine, I had started with the absurd assumption that the men of the Future would certainly be infinitely ahead of ourselves in all their appliances. I had come without arms, without medicine, without anything to smoke – at times I missed tobacco frightfully!⁴⁹¹

That he even has matches is nothing but luck, and he certainly does not bring enough for his needs. He runs out quickly, and it is only through improbable good fortune that he discovers more in the Palace of Green Porcelain. What he is able to discern is indistinct: 'the heavy smell, the big unmeaning shapes, the obscene figures lurking in the shadows, and only waiting for the darkness to come at me again!' It is the smell of blood, described as a halitus, that is perhaps the most significant single element within this world of subterranean, and moral, darkness. It is the final clue to understanding the world in which he finds himself.

The space of the Morlocks reflects the darkness of the first night that the Time Traveller spends in 802,701. It is that emphasises physicality and vulnerability, but also a sense of threatening uncertainty. All this is characterised by the overwhelming presence

of darkness. Yet the smell, and limited light, offer a glimpse of something that the Time Traveller is not able to make sense of within the social context of this world until later, when he returns to the surface. It happens at night, as the moon is on the wane, and as he considers the Eloi's abject fear of darkness. When in their caverns, he sees something that must be Morlock food:

Some way down the central vista was a little table of white metal, laid with what seemed a meal. The Morlocks at any rate were carnivorous! Even at the time, I remember wondering what large animal could have survived to furnish the red joint I saw.⁴⁹²

In the conditions of uncertainty, the indistinct qualities of this visual impression are sustained by his inability to reach his final conclusion until he speculates on the matter further. The food laid out for the Eloi, their care, feeding and maintenance suggests nothing more than the rearing of Eloi as cattle, for consumption by the Morlocks. This realisation is one that ultimately comes to define his view of 802,701, shaping models of interpretative social theory and that determines the relative interpretative readings of space, architecture and social structure. Yet the material environment still retains a complex and contradictory character. The contrasts and contradictions are reflected in the polarisation of this world into different spatial zones, of interior and exterior, light and dark. Yet it is the nature of space in the novel that although such opposing contrasts exist, their differentiation can never be sustained.

Similarly, it has been useful to divide this reading of *The Time Machine* in terms of the thematic categories employed in the chapter structure. Yet the forms of materiality and material culture discussed are hard to contain within discrete partitions, and it is therefore necessary to acknowledge that the novel is comprised of a set of overlapping planes, and to suggest the generative properties of the dense strata that they form. There are two descriptive tendencies that I would like to suggest, in their multifaceted and varied manifestations, saturate the presence of materiality and material culture in this novel: degeneration and uncertainty. As well as characterising the qualities of space in the novel, they colour and shape Wells's entire, insistently concrete, material reality,

working their way into every complex and contradictory manifestation. The oscillations set up by these solid, yet peculiarly unstable constellations, allow these forces to seep in and determine this fictional reality.

Degeneration is perhaps the more obvious tendency to identify. It is a clearly defined and explicitly modelled theme within the diegetic horizon of the novel and the details of its consistency. It refers not only to the transformations of bodies and social structure, but to time and space, from the most domestic and magnified of scales to size and scope of the cosmological, determining the fate of the solar system. Uncertainty is a form that refers to the abhuman as a loosely defined literary tendency, that is to be found exemplified within the tradition of *fin-de-siècle* gothic. It is literally embodied by the notion of the abhuman, as bodily forms that are never quite human, slipping away from any form of definitive or recognisable categorisation. Flesh becomes an amorphous and threatening form. Yet the inconfineability of uncertainty within *The Time Machine* explodes the formless threat of the abhuman into every molecule of this material world. Despite Wells's concrete reality as the bedrock upon which engaged interest in the narrative must depend, the novel is saturated by uncertainty.

The Time Traveller himself is at one stage in so much doubt about the veracity of his own story that he needs to return to his time machine, to look upon its signs of wear and damage, to touch it as if this physical contact is the only proof of certainty. The veracity of this story for Hillyer and the other guests is not of any real substance at the time of its telling, yet there is an inconsistency that threatens to undermine that solidity of their dismissal - the peculiar flowers brought back from the future:

‘It’s a curious thing,’ said the Medical Man; ‘but I certainly don’t know the natural order of these flowers. May I have them?’

The Time Traveller hesitated. Then suddenly: ‘Certainly not.’

‘Where did you really get them?’ said the Medical Man.

The Time Traveller put his hand to his head. He spoke like one who was trying to keep hold of an idea that eluded him. ‘They were put into my pocket by Weena, when I travelled into Time.’ He stared round the room. ‘I’m damned if it

isn't all going. This room and you and the atmosphere of every day is too much for my memory.⁴⁹³

These flowers are the last image in the novel, standing in for the absent Time Traveller, who's fate is one of indeterminacy:

It may be that he swept back into the past, and fell among the blood-drinking, hairy savages of the Age of Unpolished Stone; into the abysses of the Cretaceous Sea; or among the grotesque saurians, the huge reptilian brutes of the Jurassic times. He may even now – if I may use the phrase – be wandering on some plesiosaurus-haunted Oolitic coral reef, or beside the lonely saline lakes of the Triassic Age. Or did he go forward, into one of the nearer ages, in which men are still men, but with the riddles of our own time answered and its wearisome problems solved? (...) And I have by me, for my comfort, two strange white flowers – shrivelled now, and brown and flat and brittle – to witness that even when mind and strength had gone, gratitude and a mutual tenderness still lived on in the heart of man.⁴⁹⁴

Despite the definitive uncertainty that is the Time Traveller's fate, dissolved from the realm of what is concrete and certain through this act of temporal distortion, the flowers still hold some form of hope for humanity, as gestures of Weena's gratitude and affection.

The fate of the Time Traveller is not revealed, but Hillyer's role as witness to his final disappearance implicates another in what may well be the imaginary experience of a single subject within the logic of the narrative. Returning to the Time Traveller's home, Hillyer encounters him in the smoking room of the laboratory. The Time Traveller tells the outer narrator that he is terribly busy, with the machine. The Time Traveller carries a camera and a knapsack, as if preparing for a journey, and Hillyer confronts him directly about whether or not he and the other guests have been subject to an elaborate prank, or witnesses to something remarkable:

‘But is it not some hoax?’ I said. ‘Do you really travel through time?’

‘Really and truly I do.’⁴⁹⁵

At this act of confirmation, which is no more reassuring in its veracity than any other fragment of the Time Traveller's yarn, Hillyer is asked to wait. The Time Traveller tells him that he only wants half an hour in order to return with irrefutable evidence, to bring back physical proof. He makes a promise to provide material evidence of his ability to travel through time. In promising to return, he is manifesting a performative speech act, making language solid, embodied, and tied to the future presentation of some thing from another era. The request to Hillyer is both fantastic, to wait for him to return from a trip in time, and yet banal. It is a request to wait for half an hour, read some magazines that the Time Traveller has lying about his home, and then stop for lunch. In their exchange, there is an agreement to provide proof and certainty of the Time Traveller's story, a contract that despite the intimate face-to-face, eye-to-eye presence of the encounter, is never to be fulfilled. The promise is one of an eradication of uncertainty, to do the most obvious thing, prove outright the veracity of his claim with a specimen that is undoubtedly an outrageous anachronism. It is to be a promise that cannot be kept unbroken, for reasons that are left as forever unanswerable and unresolved.

However, Hiller is able to witness and perhaps verify all that he has been told through the experiencing of something so peculiar that there can be no other description of reality to account for it. He agrees to wait for the Time Traveller, but then remembers a previous appointment - reminded by so trivial a detail as an advertisement in a newspaper - and so enters the closed room housing the time machine that he might tell the Time Traveller, make his apologies and then leave:

As I took hold of the handle of the door I heard an exclamation, oddly truncated at the end, and a click and a thud. A gust of air whirled round me as I opened the door, and from within came the sound of broken glass falling on the floor. The Time Traveller was not there. I seemed to see a ghostly, indistinct figure sitting in a whirling mass of black and brass for a moment - a figure so transparent that the bench behind with its sheets of drawings was absolutely distinct; but this

phantasm vanished as I rubbed my eyes. The Time Machine had gone. Save for a subsiding stir of dust, the further end of the laboratory was empty.⁴⁹⁶

Despite visual evidence, and the sensation of a gust of air, and strange sounds, he is not clear about what he has seen:

I felt an unreasonable amazement. I knew that something strange had happened, and for the moment could not distinguish what the strange thing might be.⁴⁹⁷

This is both evidence of the tale's veracity, and further mystery; yet more perplexing and irresolvable uncertainty. Even the reality of this fantastic story cannot be one of concrete and definite knowledge, even when witnessed as a material disappearance.

This disappearance, which is already present in the text – Hillyer is witnessed by the Time Traveller acting as witness in the Time Traveller's original return⁴⁹⁸ – is one that finds no resolution, no explanation beyond the outer narrator's emotive speculation. If it is a death, it is one of a kind that is immaterial, or dematerialised. It is perhaps a reconfiguring of death as a status that is not finite, bodily, or ritualised in any material form. It is simply an ambiguously defined state of ceasing to be, or rather ceasing to be present, visible, tangible or answerable to phenomenally accessible verification. The Time Traveller's disappearance, or dematerialised death, is striking and peculiar within the context of the 1890s, which as A.N. Wilson points out, was the Golden Age of the Victorian funeral and the elaborate material and social trappings of death. Complexity and grandeur of ceremony and materiality, which today would appear excessive to commemorate the passing of a head of state, were not out of place when burying a doctor or even a grocer. Rather, such qualities were matters of routine:

The hearse would be a glass coach groaning with flowers, but smothered in sable and crepe. Four or six horses nodding with black plumes would lead the cortège, preceded by paid mutes who, swathed in black shawls and with drapes over their tall silk hats, make an alarming spectacle to the modern eye: medieval Spain could hardly produce images more macabre. Behind the coffin in their carriages

would follow the mourners, in new-bought black clothes, bombazine and crepe and tall silk hats and black gloves and bonnets - all a tribute to how much money the mourners had, and how highly they considered themselves to have climbed in the ladder-game class-system created by democratic capitalism. The more the funeral became a social status system, the more in turn it grew to be big business, with many undertakers in the larger cities becoming people of substance on the strength of it.⁴⁹⁹

This material excess of objects shaped and deployed into a formalised act of ritualising death as both finality of ending, and sustaining of cultural continuity, is conspicuously absent in *The Time Machine*. Instead, death is rendered as an ultimate state of an uncertainty. Instead of materialised ritual, death - perhaps the only certainty - is transformed into an act of waiting, one that is never to be resolved or completed.

Death as a generative focus of material culture, as the end of the embodied subject as a material form, is excised from the landscape of the text. This uncertain end of the Time Traveller is not unique in *The Time Machine*. His fate mirrors that of Weena, who also disappears, presumed dead, but whose ultimate fate is one that provides no evidence of certainty. Through her fear of the Morlocks, she enters an immobile state, motionless and scarcely breathing.⁵⁰⁰ She is severed from the stable conditions of embodied subjectivity and left without even a constituent framework to define whether or not she lives, or what has happened to her. It starts by an eradication of her resemblance to a human, or at least her recognisability as a descendent of late-Victorian subjects. Her condition increases in severity in its resemblance of death, until, as the night burns around the Time Traveller, she vanishes in what seems like some contagious form of uncertainty that surrounds Weena's body, a miasma of confusion and indeterminacy.⁵⁰¹

Death works here as a process of dematerialisation. It acts in stages upon bodies, until they are simply gone. Yet bodies are not just uncertain forms within *The Time Machine*, but ones that oscillate in changeable states of mutative possibility. Nor is this quality restricted to corporeal and anatomically defined forms, but instead applies to materiality as a field of equivalence. Part of what characterises this sense of uncertainty is that while, for example, bodies might be rendered in death through their dematerialization

to the extent of simply vanishing, they are also extremely corporeal, foregrounded as physical, vulnerable, destructive. The rendering of materiality is never reductive in the novel, rather it appears generative and full of multifarious states and suggested becomings. This sense of instability and varied transformation lends itself to the perpetuation of uncertainty in its more pronounced manifestations, to pollute and colour the entire fabric of the novel. The erasure of definitive spatial and temporal boundaries is the realisation of this dominant tendency.

The cloak of uncertainty is perhaps most strikingly suggested in regard to this indistinct differentiation inside of the Palace of Green Porcelain, as the Time Traveller, preoccupied by his exploration of the buildings interior and contents, fails to realise that he has transgressed a subtly rendered border:

Suddenly Weena came very close to my side. So suddenly that she startled me. Had it not been for her I do not think I should have noticed that the floor of the gallery sloped at all. The end I had come in at was quite above ground, and was lit by rare slit-like windows. As you went down the length, the ground came up against these windows, until at last there was a pit like the 'area' of a London house before each, and only a narrow line of daylight at the top. I went slowly along, puzzling about the machines, and had been too intent upon them to notice the gradual diminution of the light, until Weena's increasing apprehensions drew my attention. Then I saw that the gallery ran down at last into a thick darkness. I hesitated, and then, as I looked round me, I saw that the dust was less abundant and its surface less even. Further away towards the dimness, it appeared to be broken by a number of small narrow footprints.⁵⁰²

One form of vague uncertainty in the mind of Time Traveller is rapidly displaced by the sudden and sharp awareness of the indistinct, yet very real and dangerous boundary that he has transgressed, moving from one interior as it gradually shifted into that of another - the Morlock realm. Uncertainty appears within the all of the various spatial and temporal zones of *The Time Machine*. It is there from the Time Traveller's home to the most distant point in time that we are privy to in his chronic exploits. It is not a benign presence,

but one of threat. The threat is to certainty in the form of a stability of not only knowledge, but a stable, embodied subjectivity. It is a threat to being, and the stability necessary to sustain existence.

This manifest quality coalesces as the Time Traveller travels away from 802,701. the Time Traveller describes the process of time travel in terms of a journey of 'indefinite time' during which he clings to the swaying and vibrating machine.⁵⁰³ He is surprised to realise that he has pushed the operating levers forward, rather than pulled the back. These positions are analogues of the direction in which the machine travels. In this state of confusion, he has ended up not only going in the wrong direction, but has gone so far as to enter into an age of both further ambiguity, and new, hitherto unimagined terror. Yet the journey itself is to reveal something of the change that he will witness in the era of distant futurity. As he is travelling considerably faster than on his previous temporal leap, he is not initially able to discern the transitional effect of night and day. Yet 'the blinking succession of day and night'⁵⁰⁴ returns and becomes more marked, as does the slowness of the sun passing across the sky. Confusion gives way to a deduced conclusion as this effect becomes cumulatively more pronounced until there is left little doubt as to what the Time Traveller is witnessing. Before he has even come to a stop, the sun appears static before him, no longer rising or setting, signifying the degenerative end of the earth's axial rotation as it moves towards entropy and ultimately destruction.

This resolution of ambiguity and uncertainty is gloomily pessimistic, and evocative of a more-than sublime terror. The living creatures that the Time Traveller encounters here, on the desolate beach looking out onto a sea with no waves, only an oily swell, are terrible apparitions to the Time Traveller:

Far away up the desolate slope I heard a harsh scream, and saw a thing like a huge white butterfly go slanting and fluttering up into the sky and, circling, disappear over some low hillocks beyond. The sound of its voice was so dismal that I shivered and seated myself more firmly upon the machine.⁵⁰⁵

While this creature is monstrous and terrifying, it is not necessarily characterised by the pervasive sense of uncertainty that I would like to suggest permeates and dominates the

novel as a material world. However, it is not the only form of life that the Time Traveller encounters in this distant futurity:

Looking round me again, I saw that, quite near, what I had taken to be a reddish mass of rock was moving slowly towards me. Then I saw the thing was really a monstrous crab-like creature. Can you imagine a crab as large as yonder table, with its many legs moving slowly and uncertainly, its big claws swaying, its long antennae, like carter's whips, waving and feeling, and its stalked eyes gleaming at you on either side of its metallic front?⁵⁰⁶

What makes this monstrous crab-like creature more disturbing is not merely its outlandish form, but that it was at first mistaken for a rock. Its status as a living thing was not even suggested, part of the landscape until it was revealed to be a grotesque and potentially deadly animal.

The Time Traveller is, at least from his perspective, attacked by these creatures of extreme alterity. However, his highly subjective and fearful take on the situation is one that could be a combination of misunderstanding and sheer revulsion:

As I stared at this sinister apparition crawling towards me, I felt a tickling on my cheek as though a fly had lighted there. I tried to brush it away with my hand, but in a moment it returned, and almost immediately came another by my ear. I struck at this and caught something threadlike. It was drawn swiftly out of my hand. With a frightful qualm, I turned, and saw that I had grasped the antenna of another monster crab that stood just behind me. Its evil eyes were wriggling on their stalks, its mouth was all alive with appetite, and its vast ungainly claws, smeared with an algal slime, were descending upon me.⁵⁰⁷

Perhaps this is mere curiosity on the side of the crab monsters, they are approaching and feeling the Time Traveller in much the same way that the Eloi did soon after his arrival in their era. The possibility of this suggests something else disturbing in the arc of human devolution in *The Time Machine*, that perhaps these creatures are themselves distant

descendants of Victorian humanity. Not only is there uncertainty about whether or not these creatures from the earth's twilight might be actually alive, but there is also a deeply buried suggestion that they might in fact be abhuman forms of life – humanity's ultimate stage of degeneration.

The last forms of life that the Time Traveller encounters in the future are not the crab-like creatures that display a disconcertingly enthusiastic interest in his presence. He escapes them through a temporal leap forward to witness the disappearance of the sun in a dramatic eclipse. It is hidden behind what could be the moon, or possibly the planet Mercury. This indeterminate possibility is further suggestion of the degenerative forces upon the planets themselves and their relative orbits. There is still evidence of life in a green slime upon the rocks. In looking around for further signs of life, the Time Traveller thinks he sees some evidentiary motion that would attest to its presence:

A shallow sandbank had appeared in the sea and the water had receded from the beach. I fancied I saw some black object flopping about this bank, but it became motionless as a I looked at it, and I judged that my eye had been deceived, and that the black object was merely a rock.⁵⁰⁸

The darkness, the 'rayless obscurity' of the eclipsed world heightens such uncertainty. Yet as the sun dramatically reappears, there is a moment of illumination, and horror. Illumination in the form of the sun reappearing as a 'red-hot bow, horror in the moving tentacled thing, 'the size of a football perhaps'.⁵⁰⁹ This creature is formless. It is resistant against satisfying forms of description. Its effect upon the Time Traveller is overwhelming, yet perhaps this too is his descendent, an extreme form of humanity in an even more degenerate form. Humanity as an abhuman form is taken to an extreme, a point at which it is barely able to sustain itself as any stable form of matter.

Embodied in this formless mass, which is barely constituted as a body, is humanity at its end. This end, like death in *The Time Machine*, is not a clearly defined finality, but a material transformation that moves towards increasing degrees of instability and uncertainty. It is a destabilisation that pollutes all of the temporal zones of the novel, its implications rooted within the material reality of the Time Traveller's

originary period, the novel's 'present'. The appearance of the amorphous, almost cephalopodic creature that greets the Time Traveller in the far future, could be read as the climax of humanity, or in Foucaultian terms, a playing out of the end of man. If humanity, described by Foucault as 'man', is an invention, then the end of its episteme is the end of man. It is the end of man in terms of 'the human sciences', which is of course inclusive of the anthropological context of material culture itself. In referring to the human sciences, Foucault is referring to the disciplinary formation of a particular form of knowledge, or episteme. This epistemological domain was not the result of a slow, progressive development built over thousands of years, but was in Foucault's view an invention of eighteenth-century enlightenment and modernity, rather than an inheritance:

The epistemological field traversed by the human sciences was not laid down in advance: no philosophy, no political or moral option, no empirical science of any kind, no observation of the human body, no analysis of sensation, imagination or the passions, had ever encountered, in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, anything like man; for man did not exist (any more than life, or language, or labour).⁵¹⁰

Humanity itself has not been a long-lived or consistent problem within fields of human knowledge, rather it has been a recent invention within it, at least, Foucault suggests, with reference to European culture since the sixteenth century. This invention was made possible by changes to the arrangements of knowledge, in short to the disciplinary orderings of modernity.

However, Foucault points out, as perhaps the formless cephalopod-like creature that flops and slithers in the far future also suggests, that not only is man a recent invention, but perhaps a short lived one too. As those very arrangements of knowledge are but arrangements, they too might disappear:

if some event of which we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility - without knowing either what its form will be or what it promises - were to cause them to crumble, as the ground of Classical thought did, at the end

of the eighteenth century, then one can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.⁵¹¹

Humanity is literally an object of knowledge, that is deprived from the constitutive arrangements that define it, as they crumble and disappear. If humanity as it stands in the 1890s is a recent invention of modernity, it is diminished as the Time Traveller's perspective shifts further and further away along his distant temporal trajectory. It is erased as a stable disciplinary formation, and instead reconfigured in excessively degenerate and uncertain forms. The horrific life forms on the beach could indicate the presence of Foucault's theme, like a face drawn in the sand, as an idea that is played out through the transformative manifestations of material culture.

For Foucault, it is the arrangement of knowledge that creates man, or humanity, as a subject of knowledge. In *The Time Machine*, that arrangement of knowledge suffers a profound collapse. As do humans, in the most literal sense, so that they become more than abhuman. Foucault's notion of man as a recent invention is one that is both dramatically thematised in the novel, through the invention and subsequent death of man, and also serves as a methodological understanding of the novel. In this way, *The Time Machine* as a material world suggests a qualitative understanding of its own interpretation. This in itself is not something suggested explicitly by Foucault, but rather could be read as an extreme extension of the notion of man as an object of knowledge. Man, for Foucault, is a being that constitutes the representations which themselves constitute the means of life. This representation is constituted from within the social existence of a human being, and frames and facilitates that existence. The constitution of an object of knowledge in this way becomes the means to represent itself. This qualitative sensation is one that I would like to overlay as a lens upon the material world of *The Time Machine*, as an object of knowledge that in part constitutes its own means of representation and understanding.

The prevalence of uncertainty as a destructive and threatening force is not limited to the embodied form of 'man', or rather the human subject as understood by the Time Traveller as that of his own present. The effect is one that is in part defined by the term abhuman. However, whereas Kelly Hurley's use of the abhuman discussed in Chapter 3

refers to the ruination of the human subject as it is figured in the pages of gothic fiction in Britain in the late nineteenth century, its tendencies reach far beyond anatomically defined bodies in the novel, and pollute its entire fabric. The spectacle of not only bodies, but materiality, is offered through displays of matter, things, people, space and even temporality as metamorphic, undifferentiated, fragmented, and permeable. Uncertainty, together with the manifest tendencies of degeneration, as represented by the effects and appearances of abhuman bodies, dominates the presence of materiality and material culture in *The Time Machine*. The nature of that materiality and material culture is inescapably determined as text; as such all aspects of this material world are vulnerable to contamination by the abhuman - a literary manifestation of social anxiety.

Chapter 6 – Writing and Possibility

In thinking through the textual nature of this material world, the role of the Time Traveller as a fictional character might be usefully imagined as that of an ethnographer of the future, whose account constitutes the majority of the novel's text. This analogy suggests some further correlation between text and material culture. There are also undeniable literary precedents for the Time Traveller's form of account: Wells was keen to acknowledge *Gulliver's Travels* as an influence and perhaps seek some legitimacy in placing his scientific romances within existing traditions of critical fiction. More's *Utopia*, is also particularly formative, not just as the precedent for a utopian narrative but in its form. It is articulated as an account of one who has witnessed this society first hand. However, the contrivance of form in *Utopia* is to present its narrator/author, as More himself, as audience and scribe of a verbal account delivered in person by Raphael Nonsenso. It is Nonsenso who has visited Utopia, not More. Similarly, a reader of *The Time Machine* follows Hillyer's textual account, which itself is a recalled transcription of the Time Traveller's verbal performance. The Time Traveller is just a traveller. Without providing a written account (or a visual one) of his adventure and the worlds he encountered first-hand, how can he be an ethnographer? These material worlds include speech not just as the record of conversations between protagonists (in fact, there is no fully formed conversation within the Time Traveller's account). They reconstitute with implausible accuracy improbably long spoken accounts. Reading Hillyer necessitates some generous positioning on the part of the reader. That a speaker could relate a narrative with such tireless articulation and recall challenges quotidian plausibility almost as much as the invention of a time machine.

Similarly impressive is the outer-narrator's ability to remember and transcribe another's words. We therefore either overlook such matters, or assume that this is a retroactive and necessarily flawed remembering that has been put do by the narrator with as much sense of immediacy as possible. Or do we imagine that, as in Henry James's *Turn of the Screw* (1898), we are able to put ourselves into a projected situation of listening to a speaker tell us the story in person? The arrangement of the narrative around

an audience for the Time Traveller's tale certainly holds some purchase on this notion, that as a reader, we are fictionalising our presence as listener. Is this an articulation of the motif of presence? It would seem to be, and it certainly adds a sense of dynamism and diegetic immersion. The reader, in their suspension of disbelief, psychically reconstitutes the living words of somebody to which these things have happened. The fictional writer (narrator) mediates or translates the excitement and immediacy of the other's adventure.

This written presence of the written voice can be placed within modern traditions of reading. Jane Austen wrote in 1808 of how her family read aloud to each other frequently and regularly, and Dickens adapted his works for reading aloud for tours of Britain and North America. The author as live performer was a popular convention in the nineteenth century and Dickens was its greatest celebrity. Reading aloud was practiced in literary salons, and amongst an author's friends and colleagues: Samuel Butler, the author of another influential utopia – *Erewhon* (1872) – advocated reading aloud as a necessary testing of a text: 'I feel weak places at once when I read aloud where I thought, as long as I read to myself only, that the passage was all right.'⁵¹² There is here an affinity to Benjamin's lament of the excoriation of what he describes as 'experience' in 'The Storyteller'.⁵¹³ Benjamin's 'experience' moves from mouth to mouth, but in the early twentieth century has been contradicted by mechanical warfare, economic exploitation and moral corruption. Writing on the other side of the First World War, Wells's narrative has might still assume the privilege of drawing upon this sense of experience as presence within its process of psychic materialisation.

Voice, presence, ethnography, suggest a complexity of textual encounter in *The Time Machine* that might be brought into focus through 'The Violence of the Letter'. Derrida's radical transformation of the ways in which writing might be discussed is over thirty years old and has of course altered the landscapes of criticism and theory. However, it is of value here to look briefly at the form of his argument, in which Derrida reads the structuralism/structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss as phonologism. That is, based on contrasting speech sounds taken as the fundamental units of language. It is therefore an epistemologically logocentric account of language. In this chapter within *Of Grammatology*, Derrida posits an archaeology of anthropology that describes it as a study of non-European peoples as an:

index to a hidden good Nature, as a native soil recovered, of a 'zero degree' with reference to which one could outline the structure, the growth, and above all the degradation of our society and culture.⁵¹⁴

Against this teleology, field-work anecdotes from Lévi-Strauss are cited as witnessing the corruption - by the alien presence of writing and ethnographer - of an innate, almost animal goodness inherent within the Nambikwara of the Amazon region. Lévi-Strauss's own thinking is re-presented (deconstructed) in *Of Grammatology* as mythical, uncritical and bound by a logocentric binary regarding speech and writing. The Nambikwara lack, according to Lévi-Strauss, any form of writing, or even any form of graphic sensibility beyond 'a few dots and zigags on their calabashes'.⁵¹⁵ They resemble the Eloi in that they are (apparently) without writing. But in the case of the Nambikwara, this is knowledge that as primitive forms of humanity they have yet to acquire. Whereas the Eloi have, of course, forgotten their use of text. Writing pre-cedes them, but it is the loss of it as text that permits their degeneration, despite on first appearances allowing the Time Traveller to imagine humanity at its peak through its Arcadian simplicity and natural harmony, a Rousseau-like return to a 'zero-degree'. It might be the very absence of writing that, in an inversion of the yet to be degraded goodness at work in Lévi-Strauss's a-historical ethnocentric fantasy of the Nambikwara, precipitates the nightmare of the future.

Yet how absent is it? That writing preceded the age of the Eloi is the suggestive index here. The writing of 802,701, like the writing of the Nambikwara, is arche-writing. It is replete with its inherent violence of difference, mirrored by more literal forms of brutal violence encountered as well as perpetrated by the Time Traveller. The bisection between Upper and Lower worlds, the classificatory distinctions between their inhabitants (and ourselves), and the stops along the arc of the journey are prevalent examples of the violence of arche-writing. It is only the use of a system of appellations that is absent, from the Time Traveller's actions, and almost from futurity itself. The Time Traveller makes no attempts to name. Eloi and Morlock are already subject, to naming. Even Weena is able to communicate her own name. There is none of the sense of violation that Lévi-Strauss describes in the following passage:

One day, when I was playing with a group of children, a little girl was struck by one of her comrades. She ran to me for protection and began to whisper something, a 'great secret,' in my ear. (...) Eventually her adversary found out what was going on, came up to me in a rage, and tried in her turn to tell me what seemed to be another secret. After a while I was able to get to the bottom of the incident. The first little girl was trying to tell me her enemy's name, and when the enemy found out what was going on she decided to tell me the other girl's name, by way of reprisal. Thenceforward it was easy enough, though not very scrupulous, to egg the children on, one against the other, till in time I knew all of their names.⁵¹⁶

However, Derrida asserts the presence of a fallacy at work here. What functions as a 'proper name' is consciousness itself. In this sense, the proper name is only a linguistico-social classification, a designation. The act of war between these two girls does not consist in the revealing of such designations 'but in tearing the veil hiding a classification and an appurtenance, the inscription within a system of linguistico-social differences.'⁵¹⁷ This is not the desecration of an inviolate subjectivity performed in a spiteful game. Instead it begins to reveal both the structure of a particular form of violence, and writing as its possibility. A system of differences, such as writing, or a structuralist model of a society, is unimaginable without the violence of inscription and separation.

Writing as possibility, or the possibility of writing, is explicated and problematised in Derrida's re-constitution of the 'Writing Lesson'. In this chapter of *Tristes Tropiques*, Lévi-Strauss tells of how his own presence as a writing subject amongst the Nambikwara has initiated a form of corruptive violence: As a test of their reaction, Lévi-Strauss describes distributing paper and pencils amongst his hosts. A practice that seems like something of a routine exercise for Lévi-Strauss.⁵¹⁸ After the passages of a few days, they start to produce undulating horizontal lines, which are interpreted as imitations of the ethnographer's own writing:

I wondered what they were trying to do, then it was suddenly borne upon me that they were writing or, to be more accurate, were trying to use their pencils in the same way as I did mine, which was the only way they could conceive of, because I had not yet tried to amuse them with my drawings.⁵¹⁹

Their chief takes this further:

So he asked me for a writing-pad, and when we both had one, and were working together, if I asked for information on a given point, he did not supply it verbally but drew wavy lines on his paper and presented them to me, as if I could read his reply.⁵²⁰

In this story, the chief was half-fooled by his own ruse, studying his own work, with a look of disappointment on his face when its meaning wasn't revealed. Yet this incomprehensibility is never revealed openly, and according to Lévi-Strauss, there is a tacit understanding that there is decipherable meaning in the scribbling. As the chief provided immediate verbal commentaries on his writings, this is an easy enough to play along with.

This story acts a prelude for primary incident of the 'Writing Lesson'. Lévi-Strauss organises a visit to a neighbouring village, in order to get a sense of overall population size by seeing another group of Nambikwara. His hosts are uncomfortable with this idea, as these neighbours co-exist peacefully only with the most precarious of relationships. In addition to this, whites are a rare sight in the area, the last to visit having been killed. The meeting, for premise for which will be the giving of gifts by Lévi-Strauss's party and some form of barter, is tense and fraught with a palpable sense of danger. Upon Lévi-Strauss's urging to do so as soon as possible, the chief begins the process of gift exchange:

As soon as he had got the company together, he took from a basket a piece of paper covered with wavy lines and made a show of reading it, pretending to hesitate as he checked on it the list of objects I was to give in exchange for the

presents offered me (...) This farce went on for two hours. Was he perhaps hoping to delude himself? More probably he wanted to astonish his companions, to convince them that he was acting as an intermediary agent for the exchange of goods, that he was in alliance with the white man and shared his secrets.⁵²¹

Writing has made its appearance, not as the result of learning over time, but borrowed as a symbol, for a sociological rather than intellectual purpose. Its reality, it is claimed, remains unknown. It is not acquired as knowledge, remembered or understood, but functions as the means to increase the prestige of an individual at the exclusion and cost of others: 'A native still living in the Stone Age had guessed that this great means towards understanding, even if he was unable to understand it, could be made to serve other purposes.'⁵²² This is contextualised by Lévi-Strauss with a presence of writing across the world in which the majority of the member of a society are unable to practice it. A specific example is given of villages in eastern Pakistan where the inhabitants are illiterate but make use of a scribe who acts on their behalf. Writing is used 'as if it were a foreign mediatory agent that they communicate with by oral methods.'⁵²³ The scribe is empowered, and often also acts as money lender, 'someone who *has a hold* over others.'⁵²⁴

Derrida takes the title of this chapter and preserved within finds a lesson that is two-fold. The first part of this double sense is a question of the learning of writing. The chief learns the enslaving function of writing rather than its function as (secondary) signification. The other lesson is one learned from writing, Lévi-Strauss's more general meditations that take the form of troubled reflection after the incident itself. It is the presence of writing in the progressive development of mankind as a civilizing process. This is broken down into two moments by Derrida: The empirical, phenomenally immediate perception of the incident, and the historic-philosophical reflection on writing as history and scene. But these reflections are undone by Derrida's attention. The rapidity of the chief's borrowing of writing necessitates the acknowledgement that the structures that make this possible already exist. As for the means of social function implicated in the lesson, there is a problematic opposition between 'sociological' and 'intellectual'. If 'writing cannot be thought of outside of the horizon of intersubjective violence,'⁵²⁵ then

there is no form of relationship or knowledge that can be alien to it. This, of course, includes speech. The voice of the Time Traveller perhaps reflects Lévi-Strauss's scornful insistence on writing in its most literal sense is an imaging of writing as vulgar concept, opposed to the praise of an illusion of speech. The mythical authenticity of presence is certainly at play in the narrative contrivance of the two narrators. However, as literary and textual convention, it functions according to the temporal and spatial distinction of difference.

This return to 'The Writing Lesson' is not merely some nostalgic desire to look once again at a form of argument that might be taken so far for granted as to have become somewhat obscure in its specificity of form, but is emphasised in that it evokes a somewhat uncanny sense of affinity with my attempted generation of a material culture from a text. Firstly, the writing lesson itself takes place at a ceremony of gift exchange, that most profoundly influential form of binding (inter)subjectivity to objects. A brief genealogy of reflection upon such economies might begin with Bronislaw Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) and the construction of an institution model of the Kula tradition among the Trobriand islanders. This form of reciprocal gift exchange provided an alibi for regular and peaceful social contact between neighbouring social groups, as well as stabilising a secondary network of trade around the ceremony. Marcel Mauss's Durkheimian model of social cohesion - *The Gift*, originally published in *Année Sociologique* in 1923-24 - is a further explication on exchange in which objects are indissociable from giver. Reciprocity is inverted from structural functionalism into an irrational and destructive economy of excess in Bataille's first volume of *The Accursed Share*. Together with Mauss, this shattering of an ontology of use value – with as its core example the conspicuous destruction of potlatch ceremonies - finds its resonances in both the earlier works of Baudrillard that attempt to rethink Marxian commodity fetishism (*System of Objects*, *The Consumer Society*) as well as in his subsequent - and it seems increasingly prolific - models of a form of writing suitable for the saturated and extreme characteristics of seduction and simulation, transparency and evil in the post-industrial West.

In their *Value of Things*, discussed earlier, Cummings and Lewandowska also draw upon this tradition of thinking about the gift rather than relying on a Marxian

opposition of use value against commodity fetishism. The gift was subsequently made the focus of their work, *Capital* (2001). The central gesture of this work was the staging of an act of gift giving. In an area set aside for visitors to sit, read a selection of books laid out on tables and admire the view across the Thames, gallery staff would select a recipient for the gift, presenting it with the words 'This is for you'. This act would be repeated several times a day, not only at Tate Modern, but also across the river at the Bank of England Museum. The gift was a two-sided limited edition print, rolled up inside a silver-coloured tube with an elaborately scripted label. The print had also been displayed on the wall of the space in the form of two framed photographs. These showed the two ends of a spoon, part of a silver cutlery service owned by the Bank of England, the division suggestive of a split according to one side for giving and one for receiving. The gift of the print served as an anchoring device for the other elements of the project, which took the form of a seminar series and a book. The act also performed a gesture of reciprocity. An institution that relies on money drawn from taxation gave something back, implying the possible need for a subsequent act of return from the recipient. In staging this central transaction within the two co-operating institutions as the central gesture of the project, *Capital* attempts to suggest the complexity of the relationships that constitute a financial economy and an artworld. Both institutions, it is suggested, underwrite the integrity of two parallel and immensely complicated economies, guaranteeing value and ensuring stability.⁵²⁶ *Capital*, as project, and also publication, was an elegant means of implicating art objects within an a broader social and material economy, and its exploration of an inalienable reciprocity is echoed in more recent activities collaborating with others on forms of debate and practice, specifically *Open Congress* (2005-ongoing) that use as their model forms of freely available open source software.⁵²⁷

But not only does find an affinity to this discussion of material culture because of Lévi-Strauss's dramatic appearance of writing appears at a ceremony of gift exchange, that most profoundly influential and revealing of economies, but it leads to a division in the form of difference; spatial, temporal, intersubjective, material and textual, the very space that I am attempting to invoke in *The Time Machine*. Perhaps, then, the status of the Time Traveller as ethnographer is less clear-cut, as is the process of ethnography itself. He is not so in terms of any scientific method of fieldwork, but does provided an

(arche) writing of the future. And perhaps retaining some semblance of ethnography might help to address the disparity concerning the legitimate equivalences between the fictional world of *The Time Machine*, and the assumed use of material culture as an interpretative set of conditions and ideas that make sense of the phenomenally accessible world of real, solid and tangible reality. This is the assumed reality of anthropological, archaeological and museological investigation. It is the real world of artefacts, spatial environments, living, or once living subjects. To forge an equivalence necessitates some detachment from the rigorous specificities of disciplinary concerns. It also requires some liberty in the interpretation of those disciplines, and their subjective and contextual understandings of their subject matters.

However, the desire to expand the boundaries of material culture discourse comes from within as well as from the exterior. Anthropological thought may also be learning from the writing lesson. In particular, my own project can find a sympathetic resonance in the form of Christopher Tilley's work on relationships between material culture, text and metaphor. Tilley is, essentially, making a general case for modes of analysing material culture, both in anthropological and archaeological contexts, with reference to text:

Material culture is 'written' through a practice of spacing and differentiation in just the same manner as phonetic writing. Both result in the material fixation of meaning which, by contrast to speech, is indirectly communicated in the sense that I decorate a pot by dividing up the empty space of the clay or write a letter by inscribing marks on a blank sheet of paper and at some time in the future you read and interpret the visual medium, able by virtue of the material fixation to read what I have produced.⁵²⁸

To consider text then, is to reconfigure this application of archewriting back into its more vulgar form of text. It is in part a reversal of direction, from a thinking about material culture as text, to the conceptualising of text as material culture. But this really a case of taking the violence of spacing and differentiation back in words. *The Time Machine* is dominated, I have argued, by themes of degeneration and uncertainty. The articulation of

these themes is carried out through an open appellation of the text as material world. The text announces itself as material world. That it can be thought to do so owes much to Tilley's assumptions about the relative positions of text and material culture. They share common qualities but equally are differentiated from speech. Text and material culture both involve transformation, although they are very different. These transformations affect spacing, differentiation and articulation. Both are structured through spatial ordering and distinction, and the articulation of units of difference. While there are shared structural properties between text and material culture, and also speech, Tilley is also clear on the obviousness of difference and incompatibility:

However, as everyone knows, to make even the simplest statement such as 'It is raining' with material objects would be rather difficult. In fact it would be a complete waste of time and effort.⁵²⁹

The meanings constituted by material culture are not communicated forms of meaning content in this sense. Communicative statements through the articulations of material culture are better thought of as, at least in part, analogous. However, Tilley's textual metaphors are tame. He recognises a structuralist grammar of things, and a poststructuralist emphasis on metaphors of text. Yet he fails to grasp Derrida's sense of writing and difference. Language is ultimately bound to a predominantly structuralist understanding of it as a series of differential units. It is perhaps not too far removed from Lévi-Strauss's own phonologism. In a move beyond this limitation, I would like to extend this notion of material culture as a set of communicative properties that can exist outside of the confines of its artefactual, or physical, definitions. A more complete recognition of the extent to which archewriting is something without discursive exterior would serve Tilley more fully here, and allow the erasing of such a well-defined boundary between text and material culture. The space between them becomes traversable and bi-directional. This is to imagine the possibility of analogous manifestations in text taking the form of material culture, as in the ambiguously rendered flesh of the Eloi, their sexually generic, neo-classical tunics, and the ruinous halls in which they eat and sleep.

The suggested compatibility of the model of material culture as a form of text, and text as a site of material culture, is predicated upon the credible presence of acts of transformation. Such acts include the transformation of units into readable configurations, but also refer to the processes and frameworks of the disciplinary boundaries of material culture. As a discipline, the existence and identity of archaeology could be described as consisting of textualization. In short, this description applies to the need to conceive of material culture as an archaeological world through the use of language, making objects intelligible through their transference of transformation into words, as Bjornar Olsen suggests:

In short, archaeology *is* text, and to realize that we participate in the same structure as the epic, the novel and the drama is to let our own practice as producer of this text be examined by the same procedures as those applied to literary texts.⁵³⁰

Of course, in this instance, it is the literary text that is being read in terms of the disciplinary boundaries of archaeological investigation in the form of material culture. Yet within this assertion of material culture's discursive field as one that *is* text, is the possibility of the transformation of text into material culture.

Taking the transformation of a material object into meta-language and reversing the flow is a metaphorical proposition. As Tilley points out, both language and material culture are in part metaphorical constructions of the world. Metaphors could be seen as providing a basis for an interpretative understanding of the world. If this is conceivable in terms of social sciences and history, it is also, I would like to suggest, applicable to works of fiction. The narrative of *The Time Machine* is itself one that is based on metaphor. It works within the diegetic horizon as a series of allegorical and qualitative suggestions, of varying degrees of explicitness and authorial intentionality. Yet it is also present as a principle of thinking about and interpreting material culture. This is the route by which the translation of text as material culture takes. If material culture itself can be read in terms of metaphor, then the material culture of *The Time Machine*, through its reliance on metaphor, is able to translate this principle in the reconstitution of material culture, itself

imaginable as text, in the form of text as material culture. Metaphor goes some way towards interpreting a novel as material culture, not as the singular artefact of a printed book, but as a rich, complex material world, occupying a literary and psychic space somewhere between actuality and illusion. But perhaps it is an internalised recognition of the import of deconstruction that makes possible the imagining of *The Time Machine* as material world.

As a material world, this interstitial location of *The Time Machine* can be identified more specifically, between the illusion of diegesis in the form of an adventure story, and the actuality of South Kensington. Yet this zone of historical and geographical fact is one that has been atomised and reconfigured into the fabric of a more verifiable future London in which the Time Traveller might find himself; that of the present moment. South Kensington can itself be interpreted as a temporal structure that arcs from 1851 into futurity. The area of South Kensington is today overlooked by the giant golden statue of Albert atop his memorial, as it would have been in the Time Traveller's own era. As a decisive figure in the execution of the Great Exhibition and the afterlife of the Crystal Palace in Sydenham, Albert's legacy can be seen amongst the complex of institutions that stand beneath his gaze, and that were built in the metaphorical shadow of the Crystal Palace as it briefly stood in Hyde Park, a defining moment in the formation of the material culture of modernity. In the nineteenth century, their ur-forms were conceptualised as a city built in his memory, referred to as Albertopolis. Today, this consists of their modern descendants: the Victoria and Albert Museum, The Science Museum, The Natural History Museum and Imperial College.

The ever-expanding arc that reaches between 1851 into a futurity that is always moving away from this point is characterised by what Tony Bennett describes as the exhibitionary complex, an arrangement of institutional forms that are museological, but also encompass modes of public spectacle, and sites of commodity arrangement and exchange:

(...) the Great Exhibition of 1851 brought together an ensemble of disciplines and techniques of display that had been developed within the previous histories of museums, panoramas, Mechanics Institute exhibitions, art galleries, and arcades.

In doing so, it translated these into exhibitionary forms which, in simultaneously ordering objects for public inspection and ordering the public that inspected, were to have a profound and lasting influence on the subsequent development of museums, art galleries, expositions, and departments stores.⁵³¹

This list is suggestive of spaces in which material culture is ordering and interpreted, which in part frame and determine the appearances and understandings of material culture within the field of the social context of objects. Yet in *The Time Machine*, the presence of South Kensington as an originary site for such an exhibitionary complex is exploded to describe an entire material world, which covers a temporal scheme of millions of years and encompasses objects, climate, buildings and people. The world of *The Time Machine* is made in the image of South Kensington, but extended to the point at which materiality and material culture appear as something to which there is no exterior to. They actually constitute the world itself. But this is a nightmare vision of Albertopolis as an endless sprawl, in which order and stability are eradicated in favour of degeneration and uncertainty. In *The Time Machine*, material culture exceeds its containment by institutional forms, suggesting that such orderly containment might itself be nothing but a fantasy. This logic of the novel's constitution as a material world intersects with the present along the temporal trajectory from the Time Traveller's own version of South Kensington, historically binding this moment of futurity to the same hallucinatory dream.

It is to a dream that Wells likens his own scientific romances, or rather, the experience of reading them is like a dream from which we awaken upon their completion. But this would be a dream of troubled reflection rather than the mythic and fetishising dreamworlds of spectacular modernity. Or alternatively, a dream of imagining things as other than they are. Unlike *News From Nowhere* however, the dream as the literal thing itself cannot function as a device in Wells's romances. Whereas Morris has William Guest simply fall asleep and 'awaken' within a dream in which he has somehow appeared in the future, the form of journey, its very possibility, is a part of the constitution of the material world of *The Time Machine*. It is the imagining of time as fourth dimension, as medium that can be traversed and differentiated that makes this tale possible. And of course, it is a difference (differance) that is temporal, and only spatial in that it is place

differs along the trajectory of time. As with his rejection of a comparison to Verne, Wells seems to consciously work towards forms of pointed distinction.

However, despite Wells's own distaste for using the dream as device, the dream as effect lingers and resonates as utopian form. And that it does so helps to reveal that it is the presence of utopia as impulse, rather than that as project, that is ultimately articulated by Wells both here and within his more explicitly utopian thinking. In a way that Jameson – who, as discussed in Chapter 2, is eager to separate the branches of impulse from project – has failed to sufficiently acknowledge, it seems clear that impulse lies within project. The entire Volume 2 (Part IV) of Bloch's argument for the presence and necessity of the utopian impulse, *The Principle of Hope*, is after all dedicated to political/social, geographic and technological forms of utopia. The large scale planned project is imbued at the most quotidian of levels with impulse.

The discussion of the internal presence of the one within the other here calls for another of the rare insertions of artworks into this text. The work is *The House of Dreams* (2005) by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov,⁵³² and its attendance here serves the function of a coda for this thesis. The specific work is framed by a more general approach to form in the work of the Kabakovs, that of a particular conception of installation as medium. Ilya Kabakov moved to the West from the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and in an interview published in 1995, commented on an apparent desire to hear about how things were different there: '(...) I have often been asked about the differences in both lifestyles and artistic principles which are accepted in Russia and 'here'. And whether I could formulate these distinctions in one sentence.'⁵³³ Kabakov's response is that he does have such a formulation. It is to do with a difference between how an object correlates to its environment. In the West, the space surrounding an object is ignored, and attention is primarily upon the artefact itself:

This attention is all embracing. The object is being dissected and assembled, everyone is interested in how it functions, it is imbued with all inventiveness. The objects in their turn look beautiful, they are always new, clean, shining, brightly painted, each one has its own individuality, one could say that they are almost animated, they have an independent life.⁵³⁴

However, the interrelationships between these objects are indifferent; both to each other and more significantly, to their surrounding space. Of that space itself, Kabakov argues that the only thing demanded of it is that it must not interfere with the object's existence, and its demonstration of itself.

The environment must be protective, and visually must not impede concentration on the object: 'In principle, it's as though the space shouldn't exist at all.'⁵³⁵ When created intentionally, the space around an object is shaped from the objects themselves. The Russian correlation between object and space is presented as the diametric opposite:

Items as real objects don't have any significance there, for a few reasons. In the first place, they are all old, dusty, broken, 'previously used', and if they are still new, they are poorly made, don't work, ugly, shapeless. In the second place, they mostly don't server pragmatic goals – to work, to help, to make life easier (they are not capable of doing this at all) – but symbolic goals: objects act as indicators of the social membership of its owner, his social status. Therefore, it's not important for us 'what kind of thing it is' and how it works, but where and in what sense it is presented. For us, a thing doesn't speak about itself, but about the one who owns it and why he owns it.⁵³⁶

This speaking about the owner is of course a reading of objects that returns us to Mauss's evaluation of the gift – that objects are inalienably bound to the subject - and is perhaps universal rather than functioning as a specific distinction between 'East' and 'West'. However, I will not attempt to critique this position, but rather use it to think of a relationship between materiality and utopia. This is made possible by the more general shifting of emphasis from object to environment in Kabakov's argument.

Environment is also accounted for by the term 'incidental circumstances', forms of instantly readable information. It is an inseparable connection between material object and remote meaning that forms a dense contextual (and perhaps textual) substance around a thing. It is the circumstances that are important. Kabakov provides some obvious example: 'The very same table in your home and in an office is two different tables. A

conversation at the train station or a conversation about the very same thing in the office is two different conversations.’ Similarly, one finds oneself as two different people in different circumstances. And these circumstances are themselves, in Kabakov’s argument, repressive and stifling. This is all pervasive. A medieval notion of spirit of the place seizes those within. But the spirit is oppressive. Kabakov goes through the qualities of interior space in Russia:

In the first place, the rooms are always deconstructive, asymmetrical to the point of absurdity or, on the contrary, insanely symmetrical. In the second place, they look dull, oppressing, semi-dark, but this is not so because the windows are small or weak lamps are on. The main thing is that the light both during the day and at night is arranged so excruciatingly, so awkwardly that it creates a peculiar discomfort distinctive to that place alone.⁵³⁷

Space is also affected by an inadequate or perhaps malicious attention, to the degree of absurdity, to construction from planning to realisation. All is crooked, unfinished, cracked and stained. Place is haphazard, based upon a low standard that is just fit to pass. Everything is old, without any sense of when it was made. There is no patina of time, rather just a sense of useless decrepitation even if it were completed only yesterday, while dust and dirt appear to be everywhere. There is also an overwhelming sense of spaces, even private apartments, belonging to no-one. They are temporary places of residence.

There is something of a contradiction in Kabakov’s argument. He makes a case for things not mattering, as they are decrepit, but then describes their environments in the same terms, as places one wants to ignore and will forget. They are perhaps akin to the invisible institutional spaces of the West (or at least its art). But Kabakov instead suggests an extreme sensitivity to place based upon these qualities of places, as they were places that he would be thrown into, and pass through, for his entire childhood. He tells how he lived in dormitories until the age of twenty four, while his mother spent sixteen years without a living permit, constantly moving from one landlady to another. This sensitivity to place goes further, to become a pervasive socialisation of consciousness.

External life seeped in to the pores of consciousness like thick syrup. Sociality was total and dominated everything. Sociality was Soviet government structure, but also community. Intersubjective relationships could transform surrounding space. At a small level, it can be a making 'positive', but the model of family expanded to scale of state is catastrophic. Dissolute, space belongs to no-one, everything is transformed to 'common-use', or 'uselessness'. There is in Kabakov's distinction between material cultures a possibility of hope, then, as well as despair. Hope is present at the level of a small-scale, accountable intersubjectivity, but lost in the saturation of totalitarianism in the everyday. And at the centre of these possibilities, a space, or a no-place belonging to no-one. More's *Utopia* – which is of course from the Greek for 'no-place' – was overseen by Ademus, whose name derived from 'no-people'. We have in both *Utopia* and Kabakov's material culture, therefore, no-one as the mediator of the law of no-place. Independently of any Blochian analysis, Kabakov is describing utopian impulse and possibility within the totalitarian actuality of the Soviet Union. This is translated directly as a principle that determines an operational aspect of art. Not its function within society, but the way it functions in a more phenomenally-orientated and formal manner within institutional space. So Kabakov returns to the oft asked question:

If we turn to the difference between artistic principles in our country and in the West in this sense, it can be formulated this way: if in the West the object is exhibited as the main hero and the surrounding space doesn't exist at all, 'we', on the contrary, should perhaps primarily exhibit 'space' and only then arrange objects in it.⁵³⁸

This exhibiting of space rather than object is what Kabakov describes as 'total' installation. The term functions as a recognisable shorthand for the large scale installation-based work that Ilya and Emilia, his wife and collaborator, have been making since the late 1980s. It has become something of a brand identity for their work, in has lost something of its critical impulse, hence necessitating an account of its specificity. While I have tried to suggest that utopia is at the core of total installation, *The House of Dreams* addresses both project and impulse, as explicit and implicit.

At its spatial centre is a radial arrangement of oversize pedestals, complete with steps, at the top of which is situated a divan to rest or sleep upon. Inside each large pedestal is a small chamber, again furnished for institutionalised rest. In the circular, domed space of the Serpentine Gallery, there is something of the observatory about this arrangement.⁵³⁹ The adjoining rooms have become hallucinatory adaptations of a hospital ward. Beds are separated from each other by floating white curtains. The form here is derived from a scheme within the history of Soviet utopias devised by architect Konstantin Melnikov. After identifying the problem of fatigue as a hindrance to the growth and development of the Stalinist collective, he proposed a *Laboratory of Sleep* (1929), which would allow up to 4,000 workers to rest in order to restore them to their full productive potential. The plan of a central rotunda flanked by two wings is mirrored in the creation of the Kabakovs' installation, as is its promise of a restorative slumber. However, in its (re)construction, the *Laboratory* is detached from its pragmatic attempts to improve both efficiency and the overall functional productivity, as well as the operation of totalitarianism through mechanised forms of the cooperation and conformity of its subjects. What is on offer here, perhaps, is a chance to dream. There is more than a reflection of the (clumsy and slightly embarrassing) utopian project in facilitating a space of contemplative reflection. The dream in itself is not the object of interest here. Although Wells likens his scientific romances to dreaming, it is that this is a state from which one will awaken that is more significant, as an analogy that depends on an ontological certainty that the dream/fantasy is not inimical to wakefulness/reality.

Wells's reference to Morris within the text instigates a direct and adversarial relationship with *News From Nowhere*, published five years previously. In Morris's utopia, a socialist with a hatred of modernity awakens in, or rather dreams of, a medieval fantasy of the future in which capitalism and technology have been left behind by a society favouring an egalitarian and rural existence. Morris's utopian dream is dismissed; to imagine progress in the image of a pre-capitalist, pre-industrial arcadia suggested no answer for Wells, and failed to address the conditions of modernity as he saw them. And although his future is a nightmare, the momentum is still forward-looking in its call to arms. But Wells was also unlike Morris in how he constructed his utopias. Morris took the process literally, and saw himself as a purveyor of pure authorial intent. There was no

subtlety in his fantastic worlds. They were meant to represent in a clear, unclouded manner, the views of the author.

Wells, on the other hand, constructs a narrative that is polemical, but utilises materiality as a set of raw materials for cognitive engagement, as well as estrangement. Rather than spell out a utopian fantasy, as a panorama of the present through a dream of what might be, *The Time Machine* explores aspects of utopian possibility. Wells's future, although addressed as a stark warning, is still a future, and therefore perhaps more utopian a discourse than Morris's nostalgic paradise. It is concerned with addressing, ultimately to facilitate resolution, the complexities and difficulties of the present moment, of not wallowing in fantasies of the past. The gaslight in the Time Traveller's home is evidence of slowness and inefficiency, modernity's failure to move in a smooth and organised action, instead more likely to lurch forward in stops and starts like the Time Traveller's machine at the mercy of his clumsy operation.

Whatever potential technological futurity may possess is nevertheless determined by the limitations of crude and flawed subjects. Despite such limitations, the telematic apparatus of the time machine allows the protagonist to travel without leaving his home. Within this contested space of habitation, a sense of utopian discourse as a narrative of distance and alterity is collapsed within the present and the familiar. I'd like to suggest that this site functions analogously to Baudrillard's hypothetical space – screen and network rather than scene and mirror: a non-reflecting surface of communication, the very space of habitation – both psychic and architectural – can be conceived of as a point of regulation and organisation within a series of multiple networks. Within this space of habitation, a sense of utopian discourse as a narrative of distance and alterity is collapsed within the present and the familiar. The space of the novel is one in which an anti-utopian nightmare is played out, a necessary evil before the fulfilment of any utopian dream. As in *The House of Dreams*, impulse lies within project. More significantly, a meditation on/facilitation of utopian thought and practice is articulated through a highly specific discursive engagement with material culture: material culture and dream are conflated within *The Time Machine* to form a speculative form of utopian thought. Alternatively, it is this conflation that articulates the presence of these relationships outside of the realms of fantasy.

Notes for Introduction.

¹ Walter Benjamin, 'The Sock' from 'Final Version' (1938) of Berlin Childhood Around 1900, Belknap Press, Cambridge and London 2006. p.96.

² Benjamin Berlin Childhood, p.97.

Notes for Chapter 1.

³ Burgin's essay is part of a number of discussions on this matter from the 1980s, alongside Art Journal, Vol.42 No.4 1982, Hans Belting, The End of the History of Art, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1987, and Donald Preziosi, Rethinking Art History, Yale University Press, New Haven 1989.

⁴ See Mark Wilsher's citing of Gavin Butt's After Criticism: New Responses to Art and Performance, Blackwell, Oxford 2004 in 'Against Explanation' in Art Monthly, 286, May 2005. p.9.

⁵ Victor Burgin, 'The End of Art Theory', from The End of Art Theory: Criticism and Postmodernity, Macmillan Press, London 1986. p.204.

⁶ 'Art theory' is certainly not a term that is out of use. Rather, there is an understanding of how the term operates which is still in accordance with Burgin's account. For example, I currently hold a post as Senior Lecturer in Art Theory at Chelsea College of Art and Design in London. Fine Art undergraduates are under no disciplinary restrictions in terms of what they write. They are not asked to write about art. Rather, there is an emphasis on writing on themes that are in some way relevant to practice, and that identifies and explores theories of representation. This is clearly and obviously distinct from the disciplinary requirements of work undertaken in art history departments.

⁷ This is, of course, a reference to Walter Benjamin's Angel of History, as described in 'Thesis on the Philosophy of history' in Illuminations, Fontana, London 1982. Embodied by Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus* (1920), for Walter Benjamin this was a construction of history that was critical of mythic progress. The angel is hurled into the future, looking backwards at the forces that are propelling him. Rather than seeing a chain of events, he witnesses a single catastrophe and its relentless wreckage. Progress is this violent storm. All the past is therefore visualized as this simultaneous wreckage.

⁸ See Art and Language, Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven 1980.

⁹ See W.J.T. Mitchell, Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1986.

¹⁰ The recent work and status of the Material Culture Group is well documented in Buchli (Ed.) The Material Culture Reader, Berg, Oxford and New York 2002. My account of their positions therefore draws heavily upon their succinct accounts provided here. It is also worth noting that Buchli points out that 'In terms of the British academic traditions of which this group is a part, the cohort is quite firmly situated within the Universities of London and Cambridge and their schools, departments and institutes of archaeology and anthropology.' (Buchli p.1.) He states that these British academic traditions are differentiated from those of the United States, which as well as coming out of anthropology and archaeology are also influenced by American folklore studies.

¹¹ With the exception of Bender, whose work I know only in published form.

¹² Barbara Bender, 'Landscape and Politics' in Buchli Material Culture, p.138.

¹³ Michael Brian Schiffer, The Material Life of Human Beings: Artifacts, behavior and communication, Routledge, London and New York 1999. p.2.

¹⁴ Schiffer, Material Life, p.5.

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- ¹⁵ See 'Introduction: Resisting Blackmail' in Painting as Model, MIT Press, Cambridge and London 1990. pp.xi-xxx.
- ¹⁶ Schiffer, Material Life, p.6.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ This could be just an unfortunate oversight, being published in 1999, a bulk of background research being done in the early to mid 90s. However, it is still places a significant absence within the project.
- ¹⁹ See Introduction in Daniel Miller (Ed.), Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter, UCL Press London 1998.
- ²⁰ I am specifically referring to Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex', Routledge, New York and London 1993.
- ²¹ Susan M. Pearce (Editor), Experiencing Material Culture in the Western world, Leicester University Press, London and Washington 1997. p. 7.
- ²² Susan M. Pearce, On collecting: An investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition, Routledge, New York and London 1999. p. 13.
- ²³ Susan M. Pearce (Ed.) Interpreting Objects and Collections, Routledge, London and New York 1996. p.9.
- ²⁴ Susan M. Pearce (Ed.) Interpreting Objects and Collections, Routledge, London and New York 1996. p.9.
- ²⁵ Donald Preziosi and Louise A. Hitchcock, Aegean Art and Architecture, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1999. p.25.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Preziosi and Hitchcock Aegean Art, p.26.
- ²⁸ See 'Translator's Introduction' in Immanuel Kant, Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime, University of California Press, Berkeley and London 2003.
- ²⁹ Preziosi and Hitchcock Aegean Art, p.26.
- ³⁰ Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1997. p.158.
- ³¹ Preziosi and Hitchcock Aegean Art, p.25.
- ³² Mark P. Leone, 'Archaeology's Relationship to the Present and the Past', in Gould and Schiffer (Eds.) Modern Material Culture, The Archaeology of Us, Academic Press, New York and London 1981. p.5.
- ³³ For a detailed history of anthropology itself, see Paul A. Erickson and Liam D. Murphy, A History of Anthropological Theory, Broadview Press, Ontario 2001.
- ³⁴ 'Introduction' in Buchli (Ed.) Material Culture, p.2.
- ³⁵ Buchli, Material Culture, p.3.
- ³⁶ Erickson and Murphy, Anthropological Theory, p.17.
- ³⁷ Erickson and Murphy, Anthropological Theory, p.19.
- ³⁸ 'Introduction' in Daniel Miller (Ed.), Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter, UCL Press London 1998. p.3.
- ³⁹ Miller Material Cultures, p.6.
- ⁴⁰ Miller Material Cultures, p.3.
- ⁴¹ Miller Material Cultures, p.6.
- ⁴² Miller Material Cultures, p.7.
- ⁴³ Miller Material Cultures, p.9.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid
- ⁴⁵ Miller Material Cultures, p.10.
- ⁴⁶ Preziosi Rethinking Art History, p.179.
- ⁴⁷ Preziosi The Art of Art History, p.13.
- ⁴⁸ For example, see Charles Jencks' What is Postmodernism, Wiley-Academy London 1996 and Foster (Ed.) Postmodern Culture, Pluto Press London 1983.
- ⁴⁹ Preziosi Rethinking Art History, p.179.
- ⁵⁰ In Susanne Keuchler, 'The Art of Ethnography: The Case of Sophie Calle', in Coles (Ed.) Site Specificity.
- ⁵¹ James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art, Harvard University Press, Cambridge and London, 1988.

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- ⁵² Hal Foster, 'The Artists As Ethnographer', in Return of the Real, MIT Press, Cambridge and London 1996.
- ⁵³ See for example, Preziosi Aegean Art and Architecture and Brain of the Earth's Body.
- ⁵⁴ Matthew Rampley, 'Anthropology at the Origins of Art History' in Alex Coles (Ed.) Site Specificity: The Ethnographic Turn, Black Dog Publishing, London 2001. pp.138-163.
- ⁵⁵ Since 2000, I have been writing consistently and extensively for a number of magazines, journals and catalogues on contemporary art, as well as aspects of C19th material culture. Therefore I feel justified in defining my professional activities, other than teaching, through my practice as a critic.
- ⁵⁶ Henri Focillon, The Life of Forms in Art, Zone Books, New York 1996. p.32.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid
- ⁵⁸ Joseph Leo Koerner, 'Bosch's Equipment', in Lorraine Daston (Ed.), Things that Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science, Zone Books, New York 2004. p.64.
- ⁵⁹ There is some reliance here, somewhat hypocritically, on received impressions of 'spectacle' within recent debates. I do not wish to place too much emphasis on what might be read as a confirmation or reiteration of this prejudice. Rather, I would direct a reader to Dan Smith, 'Size Matters' in Art Monthly, December 2004/January 2005. pp.1-4.
- ⁶⁰ Foster, Krauss, Bois and Buchlow, Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism, Thames and Hudson, London 2004.
- ⁶¹ It should also be noted, of course, that all four authors sit upon the editorial board of October. For a history of the early years of Artforum and the internal schism that led to the establishing of October, see Amy Newman, Challenging Art: Artforum 1962-74, SoHo Press, New York, 2000.
- ⁶² It should be noted that these authors' own book provides a good account of some of art history's methodological possibilities as they have taken shape over the past 40 or so years.
- ⁶³ Rosalind Krauss, 'Poststructuralism and the Paraliterary' in The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths, MIT Press, Cambridge and London 1986. p.291.
- ⁶⁴ Krauss, Originality, p.292.
- ⁶⁵ Krauss, Originality, p.292.
- ⁶⁶ Krauss, Originality, p.292.
- ⁶⁷ Krauss, Originality, p.295.
- ⁶⁸ Hal Foster, 'Art Critics in Extremis' in Design and Crime and Other Diatribes, Verso, New York and London 2002. p.104.
- ⁶⁹ See 'Introduction: Resisting Blackmail' in Painting as Model, MIT Press, Cambridge and London 1990. pp.xi-xxx.
- ⁷⁰ Donald Judd, 'Specific Objects', in Arts Yearbook 8, New York 1965. pp.74-82.
- ⁷¹ The context of this paragraph is as a framing device for a review of Newman's Challenging Art, and is therefore brief by necessity. However, some responsibility must be taken by Foster as to how he has presented this, as his question has nonetheless seemed to appear as a recurring reference spoken in discussions about art criticism either in classrooms, symposia, or general conversation.
- ⁷² Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in Image, Music, Text, Fontana, London 1977. For a detailed discussion of Barthes' contribution to debates around authorship, see Sean Burke, The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 1998.
- ⁷³ For a summary of the notion of cultural field, see Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Intellectual Field: A World Apart,' from In Other Words Stanford University Press, Palo Alto 1990.
- ⁷⁴ For a recent account of how contemporary art has been shaped as a cultural field at the end of the twentieth century, see Chin-Tau Wu Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention since the 1980s, Verso, London and New York 2003. Whereas Bourdieu suggests structural equivalence between fields such as political and literary, Wu's account is more of a collapse between such distinctions with regard contemporary art and its economic context.
- ⁷⁵ See Andrea Fraser, 'How to Provide an Artistic Service: An Introduction' in Kocur and Leung (Eds.) Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985, Blackwell, Oxford 2005. pp.69-75.
- ⁷⁶ See Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Kabyle House or the World Reversed' (1970) in The Logic of Practice, Polity Press, Cambridge 1992.

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- ⁷⁷ The specific nature of art practice and its discursive manifestations of criticism and theory are also implicated in Bourdieu's notion of field – See Miwon Kwon, 'One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity', in *October* 80 (Spring 1997). Also reprinted in Kocur and Leung's *Theory*.
- ⁷⁸ Alex Coles, 'The Bathroom Critic', *Art Monthly*, February 03 / No 263. p.8. Also available at <http://www.artmonthly.co.uk/acoles.htm>
- ⁷⁹ Coles, 'The Bathroom Critic', p.9.
- ⁸⁰ Coles, 'The Bathroom Critic', p.10.
- ⁸¹ Wilsher, 'Against Explanation', p.9.
- ⁸² Cited in Wilsher, 'Against Explanation', p.9.
- ⁸³ Peter Suchin, 'For Explanation', *Art Monthly*, June 05, 287. p.9. It could be noted here that perhaps it can be assumed that Barthes is one of those who Wilsher sees as having failed to deconstruct their own authority,
- ⁸⁴ Suchin, 'For Explanation', p.9.
- ⁸⁵ Suchin, 'For Explanation', p.9. See Fiona Candlin's 'A Dual Inheritance: The Politics of Educational Reform and PhDs in Art and Design', in *The International Journal of Art and Design Education*, Vol 20, No 3, 2001. and Jon Thompson in Antonia Payne (Ed.) *Research and the Artist: Considering the Role of the Art School*, The Laboratory, Ruskin School of Art, Oxford University, 2000.
- ⁸⁶ Suchin, 'For Explanation', p.10.
- ⁸⁷ Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, The MIT Press, Cambridge and London 2004. p.xii.

Notes for Chapter 2.

- ⁸⁸ Darko Suvin writes in *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1979, 'Ernst Bloch's monumental philosophical opus, culminating in *Hope the Principle*, has reinterpreted utopia (...) as being any overstepping of the boundaries given to man, hence a quality inherent in all creative thought and action.' p.39.
- ⁸⁹ Frederic Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*, Verso, London and New York 2005. p.2.
- ⁹⁰ Jameson, *Archaeologies*, p.3.
- ⁹¹ Cited in Johanne Lamoureux, 'Seeing Through Art History: Showing Signs of Legibility', in Donald Preziosi, *In the Aftermath of Art: Ethics, Aesthetics, Politics*, Routledge, Abingdon and New York 2006.
- ⁹² Wells's engagement with utopian ideas has generated an immense amount of critical response and interpretation, of which I shall provide a very brief and selective list here: Bernard Bergonzi, *The Early H.G. Wells*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1961. Mark R Hillegas, *The Future as Nightmare: H. G. Wells and the Anti-Utopians*, Oxford University Press, New York 1967. Keith Booker, 'H.G. Wells: A Modern Utopia.' *Dystopian Literature: A Theory Research Guide*, Greenwood, Westport 1994. 63-67. Chris Ferns, *Narrating Utopia: Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Literature*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1999. Leon Stover, *The Shaving of Karl Marx: An Instant Novel of Ideas, After the Manner of Thomas Love Peacock, in Which Lenin and H. G. Wells Talk About the Political Meaning of the Scientific Romances*, The Chinon Press, Illinois 1982. Patrick Parrinder, 'Utopia and Meta-Utopia in H.G. Wells.' *Utopian Studies* 1 (1987) 79-97, and 'News from Nowhere, The Time Machine and the Break Up of Classical Realism.' *Science Fiction Studies*, (1976) 265-274.
- ⁹³ See John Carey's brief account of Wells's utopian thought, *The Faber Book of Utopias*, Faber and Faber, London 1999. p.368.
- ⁹⁴ H.G. Wells *A Modern Utopia*, Penguin, London 2005. p.22.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ⁹⁶ Patrick Parrinder, 'Biographical Note' in *A Modern Utopia*, p.xii.
- ⁹⁷ Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1979. p.4.
- ⁹⁸ Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, p.63.
- ⁹⁹ Suvin, *Metamorphoses*, pp.222-236.

- ¹⁰⁰ For example, see Patrick Brantlinger, 'Victorian Science Fiction.' A Companion to the Victorian Novel. Brantlinger and W.B. Thesing (Eds.) Blackwell, Oxford 2005. p.370.
Also see Edward James, 'Science Fiction by Gaslight: An Introduction to English-Language Science Fiction in the Nineteenth Century', in Anticipations: Essays on Early Science Fiction and its Precursors, David Seed (Ed.), Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1995.
- ¹⁰¹ Brantlinger, 'Victorian Science Fiction'. p.370.
- ¹⁰² Brantlinger, 'Victorian Science Fiction'. p.370.
- ¹⁰³ Brantlinger, 'Victorian Science Fiction'. p.371.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁵ Darko Suvin, Victorian Science Fiction in the UK: The Discourses of Knowledge and of Power, G.K. Hall and Co., Boston 1983.
- ¹⁰⁶ Brantlinger, 'Victorian Science Fiction'. p.370.
- ¹⁰⁷ James, Anticipations, 1995. p.26.
- ¹⁰⁸ Brian Aldiss, Trillion Year Spree: The History of Science Fiction, Gollancz, London 1986.
- ¹⁰⁹ James, Anticipations, 1995. p.44.
- ¹¹⁰ I.F. Clarke, Voices Prophesying War 1763-1984, Oxford University Press, London 1964, and Lyman Tower Sargent, British and American Utopian Literature, 1516-1975: An Annotated Bibliography, G.K.Hall, Boston 1979.
- ¹¹¹ James, Anticipations, 1995. p.28.
- ¹¹² James, Anticipations, 1995. p.28.
- ¹¹³ Suvin, Metamorphosis, p.222.
- ¹¹⁴ Tom Moylan, Scraps of Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia, Westview Press, Boulder 2000. p.70.
- ¹¹⁵ Moylan, Scraps of Untainted Sky, p.276.
- ¹¹⁶ Focillon, The Life of Forms, p.138.
- ¹¹⁷ It is with such factors in mind that I would suggest not only including Conrad's *Youth* into the realm of utopian fiction – as in Carey, John. The Faber Book of Utopias. London: Faber and Faber, 1999. – but also including protagonist Charlie Marlow's more well known tale, Heart of Darkness. Written at the end of the nineteenth century, based on what Conrad had seen in 1890, but not published until 1902, this should be included in the moment of the late nineteenth-century critical utopian imagination. As A Modern Utopia – published in 1905 – makes clear, the tradition of late nineteenth-century utopian thought failed to respect precise divisions of the calendar.
- ¹¹⁸ Francis Wheen, 'Introduction' in A Modern Utopia, p.xvi
- ¹¹⁹ As Tom Moylan himself points out in Scraps of Untainted Sky: 'H.G. Wells's Time Traveller struggles to ground his vision and find his way, and by metaphoric extension the way of humanity, in a nasty future in which his own present, Wells's empirical moment and the Time Traveller's 'Britain', is the terrifying past'. p.3.
- ¹²⁰ Moylan, Scraps, p.5
- ¹²¹ Suzanne Keen, Victorian Renovations of the Novel: Narrative Annexes and the Boundaries of Representation, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005. p.11.
- ¹²² Ibid.
- ¹²³ Keen, Victorian Renovations, p.19. I would like to point out that although The Time Machine does not, in Keen's view, constitute the presence of a narrative annex as such, it still provides, as a whole, a representational space of alterity for the imagining of past, present and future.
- ¹²⁴ Keen, Victorian Renovations, p.19.
- ¹²⁵ Cited in Keen, Victorian Renovations, p.24.
- ¹²⁶ Keen, Victorian Renovations, p.24.
- ¹²⁷ Moylan, Scraps, p.5.
- ¹²⁸ Moylan, Scraps, p.5.
- ¹²⁹ H.G. Wells, Authorial Preface to The Scientific Romances of H.G. Wells, Gollancz, London 1933. p.vii.
- ¹³⁰ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.viii.
- ¹³¹ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.viii.
- ¹³² Suvin, Metamorphoses, p.8.
- ¹³³ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.viii.
- ¹³⁴ See Brian Stableford, 'Frankenstein and the Origins of Science Fiction', in Anticipations, p.54.

- ¹³⁵ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.ix.
- ¹³⁶ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.ix.
- ¹³⁷ Patrick Parrinder (Ed.), H. G. Wells: The Critical Heritage, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and Boston 1972. p.332.
- ¹³⁸ Cited in Hildi Hawkins and Danielle Olsen (Eds.), The Phantom Museum, Profile Books, London 2003. p.xvii.
- ¹³⁹ For a detailed account of these poststructuralist takes on authorship, see Sean Burke, The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 1998.
- ¹⁴⁰ Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in Image, Music, Text, Fontana, London 1977. p.142.
- ¹⁴¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁴² Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author', in Paul Rabinow (Ed.), The Foucault Reader, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1991. p.102.
- ¹⁴³ Foucault, Foucault Reader. p.102.
- ¹⁴⁴ Foucault, Foucault Reader. p.104.
- ¹⁴⁵ Foucault, Foucault Reader. p.105.
- ¹⁴⁶ Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Eds.) Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas, Blackwell, Oxford and Malden 2003. p.944.
- ¹⁴⁷ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.vii.
- ¹⁴⁸ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.ix.
- ¹⁴⁹ Wells, The Scientific Romances, p.ix.
- ¹⁵⁰ Wells's own life had already been partially and obliquely narrated in *Kipps* (1905) and *A History of Mr. Polly* (1910), but as veiled allegory.
- ¹⁵¹ See their respective editions of *The Time Machine*. Parrinder also provides an excellent account of biographical material on Wells. The most vivid and memorable is of course Wells's own text, with a previously suppressed postscript published by his son G.P. Wells – *H.G. Wells in Love*, Faber and Faber, London 1984. Parrinder also finds noteworthy in their scholarly depth are the following: Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie, *The Time Traveller*, Hogarth Press, London 1987. David C. Smith, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1986.
- ¹⁵² Bromley- then a market town in Kent, but soon to be integrated into the suburban growth of South London.
- ¹⁵³ John Lawton, 'Chronology of Wells's Life', in H.G. Wells, The Time Machine, J.M. Dent, London 2000. p.x. a fact verified by a reading of copies of the said journal. This edition of the novel is a reprint of the 1995 centenary edition.
- ¹⁵⁴ Leon Stover (Ed.) H.G. Wells, The Time Machine: An invention: A critical text of the 1895 London First Edition, with an introduction and appendices, McFarland and company, Jefferson and London 1996. p.229.
- ¹⁵⁵ Science Schools Journal, 1886, p.2.
- ¹⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁷ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, 1996 p.232.
- ¹⁵⁸ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, 1996 p.229.
- ¹⁵⁹ John Lawton, 'The Drafts of *The Time Machine*: A Determined Story', in H.G. Wells, The Time Machine, (2000). pp.i-li.
- ¹⁶⁰ 'The Chronic Argonauts', in Stover The Time Machine: An Invention, 1996 p.180.
- ¹⁶¹ Lawton, The Time Machine, 2000. p.i.
- ¹⁶² John Lawton, 'Wells and his Critics', in H.G. Wells, The Time Machine, 2000 p.88.
- ¹⁶³ Edward James, 'Science Fiction by Gaslight: An Introduction to English-Language Science Fiction in the Nineteenth Century', in David Seed (Ed.) Anticipations: Essays on Early Science Fiction and its Precursors, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1995. p.29.
- ¹⁶⁴ James, Anticipations, p.29.
- ¹⁶⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶⁶ See Lawton's note on the text in Wells, The Time Machine, 2000. p.liii.
- ¹⁶⁷ See Parrinder in note on the text in Wells, The Time Machine, 2005. p.xxxii.
- ¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

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- ¹⁶⁹ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, 1996.
¹⁷⁰ See Stephen Roger Fischer, A History of Reading, Reaktion, London 2004. p. 279.
¹⁷¹ Cited in Lawton, The Time Machine, 2000 p.85.

Notes for Chapter 3.

- ¹⁷² Mary Douglas, Natural Symbols, Penguin, Middlesex and Victoria 1973. p.93.
¹⁷³ Ibid.
¹⁷⁴ Vicky Kirby, Telling Flesh: The Substance of the Corporeal, Routledge, New York and London 1997. p.55.
¹⁷⁵ See Kirby Telling Flesh, p.19.
¹⁷⁶ Kirby Telling Flesh, p.60
¹⁷⁷ Kirby Telling Flesh, p.62.
¹⁷⁸ Kelly Hurley The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1996. p.3.
¹⁷⁹ Hurley, The Gothic Body, p.4.
¹⁸⁰ Ibid.
¹⁸¹ Hurley, The Gothic Body, p.5.
¹⁸² Martin Gliserman, Psychoanalysis, Language and the body of the text, University Press of Florida, Gainesville 1996.
¹⁸³ Gliserman, Psychoanalysis, p.2.
¹⁸⁴ Gliserman, Psychoanalysis, p.11.
¹⁸⁵ H.G. Wells, The Time Machine: An Invention, Heinemann, London 1895. p.33 (Abbreviated to TTM).
¹⁸⁶ Wells, TTM, p.86.
¹⁸⁷ Wells, TTM, p.20.
¹⁸⁸ Patrick Parrinder, Shadows of the Future: H.G. Wells, Science Fiction and Prophecy, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1995. p.46.
¹⁸⁹ Graeme Tytler, Physiognomy in the European Novel: Faces and Fortunes, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1982. p.36.
¹⁹⁰ Both physiognomy and phrenology make a surprising and valuable appearance in Melville's Moby Dick (1851), as Ishmael reflects upon the possible correspondences between the vast and unique form of the sperm whale and its innate qualities.
¹⁹¹ Tytler, Physiognomy, p.34.
¹⁹² Tytler, Physiognomy, p.xiv.
¹⁹³ My reading of Lombroso is heavily indebted to Hurley's account of his work.
¹⁹⁴ Hurley, The Gothic Body, p.93.
¹⁹⁵ Hurley, The Gothic Body, p.94.
¹⁹⁶ Max Nordau, Degeneration, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London 1993. p. VII.
¹⁹⁷ Nordau, Degeneration, p.XV
¹⁹⁸ Wells, TTM, p.31.
¹⁹⁹ Wells, TTM, pp.33-34.
²⁰⁰ Wells, TTM, p.34.
²⁰¹ See Geduld's reading of Casey Fredericks The Future of Eternity, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1982, in The Definitive Time Machine: A Critical Edition of H. G. Wells's Scientific Romance, Indian University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987. p.101.
²⁰² See H. G. Wells, edited by Leon Stover The Time Machine: An Invention: A Critical Text of the The Time Machine London First Edition, with an Introduction and Appendices, McFarland and company, Jefferson and London 1996. The social point was reinforced by Wells's insistence that the cover of the first London edition of The Time Machine should represent an image of the Sphinx.
²⁰³ Arthur Conan Doyle, A Study in Scarlet, Modern Library, New York 2003.
²⁰⁴ More evidence of Carlyle's ubiquity may be found by his prominent position in Ford Madox Brown's painting Work (1863). See A.N. Wilson, The Victorians, Arrow, London 2003. p.158.

- ²⁰⁵ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p. 3.
- ²⁰⁶ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p. 2.
- ²⁰⁷ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p. 7.
- ²⁰⁸ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p. 8.
- ²⁰⁹ This conflation of the social and physiological is epitomised by an illustration of a gorilla which had served as an emblem of uncanny terror for Wells during childhood.
- ²¹⁰ Wells, TTM. p.36.
- ²¹¹ Frank D. McConnell (Editor) H.G. Wells, The Time Machine, The War of the Worlds: A Critical Edition, Oxford University Press, New York 1977. p.34.
- ²¹² Wells, TTM. p.33.
- ²¹³ Wells, TTM. p.39.
- ²¹⁴ Wells, TTM. p.40.
- ²¹⁵ Wells, TTM. p.47.
- ²¹⁶ Wells, TTM. p.50.
- ²¹⁷ Wells, TTM. p.51.
- ²¹⁸ Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, Penguin, London 1985, p.74.
- ²¹⁹ Wells, TTM. p.36.
- ²²⁰ Wells, TTM. p.71.
- ²²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²²² *Ibid.*
- ²²³ Wells, TTM. pp.71-72.
- ²²⁴ Wells, TTM. p.72.
- ²²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²²⁹ Wells, TTM. p.73.
- ²³⁰ Tamar Garb, Bodies of Modernity: Figure and Flesh in Fin-de-Siècle France, Thames and Hudson, London 1998. p.11
- ²³¹ *Ibid.*
- ²³² *Ibid.*
- ²³³ Garb, Bodies of Modernity, p.12.
- ²³⁴ Garb, Bodies of Modernity, p.11.
- ²³⁵ Included as elements of this precarious balance are paintings of women by Renoir, which while continuing with conventions of bodily representation also depicted radical and excessive forms of their imagining. However, Garb also includes images from the French physical culture movement, which can be read as the origins in nineteenth-century modernity of what might now be called body building. This is read as an urgent attempt to redefine modern masculinity, made more apparent by France's significant defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. Founded in 1890, La Revue Athlétique picked up on a tendency to draw up unflattering between modern men and the bodies of the idealised ancestors from antiquity.
- ²³⁶ Wells, TTM. pp.107-108.
- ²³⁷ Chris Tilley 'The Metaphorical Transformations of Wala Canoes', in Buchli, Material Culture Reader, p.27.
- ²³⁸ Marilyn Strathern, The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1988. p.14.
- ²³⁹ Tilley, 'Metaphorical Transformations', p.27.
- ²⁴⁰ Tamsin Lorraine, Irigaray and Deleuze: Experiments in Visceral Philosophy, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 1999. p.IX.
- ²⁴¹ Anne E. Becker, Body, Self and Society: The View from Fiji, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996. p.27.
- ²⁴² Cited in Becker, Body, Self and Society, p.28.
- ²⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, cited in Becker, Body, Self and Society. p.28.
- ²⁴⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998. p.85.
- ²⁴⁶ Judith Butler, 1993. p. 2.

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- ²⁴⁷ Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex', Routledge, New York and London 1993. p. 2.
- ²⁴⁸ Wells, TTM. p.113.
- ²⁴⁹ This sense of radicality is mirrored in Wells's own life, as well as throughout the themes he was later to address in texts such as Anne Veronica, Tono-Bungay (1909) and A History of Mister Polly (1910).
- ²⁵⁰ Wells, TTM. p.117.
- ²⁵¹ Patrick Parrinder, Shadows of the Future: H.G. Wells, Science Fiction and Prophecy, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1995. p.48.
- ²⁵² Ibid.
- ²⁵³ Ibid.
- ²⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵⁵ Wells, TTM. p.118.
- ²⁵⁶ Wells, TTM. pp.118-119.
- ²⁵⁷ Wells, TTM. pp.28-29.
- ²⁵⁸ Wells, TTM. p.31.
- ²⁵⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁰ Wells, TTM. pp.31-32.
- ²⁶¹ Wells, TTM. p.32.
- ²⁶² Ibid.
- ²⁶³ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁵ Wells, TTM. p.33.
- ²⁶⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁸ Wells, TTM. p.120.
- ²⁶⁹ Wells, TTM. pp.120-121.
- ²⁷⁰ Wells, TTM. p.121.
- ²⁷¹ Ibid.
- ²⁷² Wells, TTM. pp.121-122.
- ²⁷³ Wells, TTM. p.122.
- ²⁷⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁷⁸ Wells, TTM. p.124.
- ²⁷⁹ Wells, TTM. p.123.
- ²⁸⁰ Wells, TTM. pp.123-124.
- ²⁸¹ Wells, TTM. p.124.
- ²⁸² Ibid.
- ²⁸³ Ibid.
- ²⁸⁴ Wells, TTM. p.126.
- ²⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁸⁶ Wells, TTM. p.127.
- ²⁸⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸⁸ Wells, TTM. p.37.
- ²⁸⁹ Wells, TTM. pp.37-38.
- ²⁹⁰ Wells, TTM. p.38.
- ²⁹¹ Wells, TTM. p.37.
- ²⁹² Ibid.
- ²⁹³ Wells, TTM. pp.116-117.
- ²⁹⁴ Wells, TTM. p.117
- ²⁹⁵ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p.144.
- ²⁹⁶ Ibid
- ²⁹⁷ Wells, TTM. pp.105-106.

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- ²⁹⁸ Immanuel Kant, Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime, University of California Press, Berkeley and London 2003. pp.49/50.
- ²⁹⁹ Wells, TTM. p.10.
- ³⁰⁰ Wells, TTM. pp.147-148.
- ³⁰¹ Bernard Bergonzi, 'The Time Machine as Ironical Myth', in Bergonzi (Ed.) H. G. Wells: A collection of critical essays, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey 1976. p. 42.
- ³⁰² Jean Baudrillard, The System of Objects, Translated by James Benedict, Verso, London and New York 1996. p.24.
- ³⁰³ George Locke, Pearson's Weekly: A Checklist of Fiction 1890-1939, Ferret Fantasy, 1990. p.107
- ³⁰⁴ Wells, TTM. p.134.
- ³⁰⁵ Linda Nead, 'The Devil in the Studio' in Tate Etc no.6, 2006. pp.90-95.
- ³⁰⁶ Terry Ramsaye, A Million and One Nights: A History of Motion Picture, Volume I. Simon and Schuster, New York 1926.
- ³⁰⁷ Anne Friedberg, Window shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern, University of California Press, Berkeley and Oxford 1993.
- ³⁰⁸ Ramsaye, A Million and One Nights, p.153.
- ³⁰⁹ Wells, TTM. p.16.
- ³¹⁰ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p.43.
- ³¹¹ Wells, TTM. p.28.
- ³¹² Wells, TTM. p.143.
- ³¹³ Wells, TTM. p.28.
- ³¹⁴ Ramsaye, A Million and One Nights, p.154.
- ³¹⁵ Ibid.
- ³¹⁶ Wells, TTM p.28.
- ³¹⁷ Wells, TTM. p.29.
- ³¹⁸ See Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p.245.
- ³¹⁹ Friedberg, Window Shopping, p.100.
- ³²⁰ Wells, TTM. p.143.
- ³²¹ Wells, TTM. p.14.
- ³²² Wells, TTM. pp.14-15.
- ³²³ Wells, TTM. pp.31-32.
- ³²⁴ This is also a risk faced by the users of the teleportation devices, known as Transporters, used in the various manifestations of the Star Trek franchise. Originally employed by the producers of the original 1960s series as it provided a low-cost effect that enabled characters to move between their ship and the planet they are currently orbiting. This device breaks down the bodies of the passengers into their subatomic constituents, converting matter to energy, and reassembling them at the point of destination. This technique requires the incorporation of elaborate forms of technology which ensure that the passenger is not reassembled within solid matter. When this safe passage cannot be guaranteed, often through the result of some form of atmospheric interference, the transporters cannot be used. The level of technological safeguards that ensure the proper functioning of a transporter has resulted in it being described, within an episode of *The Next Generation*, as 'the safest way to travel', an analogy with the statistical improbability of being involved in a plane crash.
- In James Cameron's film *Terminator II: Judgement Day* (1991)³²⁴, two protagonists, travel from the future to present day Los Angeles. Although not referred to within the narrative, the scenes that show them arrive indicate that this very problem of rematerialisation within solid matter has been addressed. Each character appears within some kind of ball of energy that cuts through the matter around it, leaving a concave indentation in the ground and the negative impression of a sphere in anything that it comes into contact with. By disintegrating the matter that occupies the space of rematerialisation, this technique ensures the safe arrival of the film's time travellers.
- ³²⁵ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p.204.
- ³²⁶ Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p.59.

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- ³²⁷ See Wells, TTM, p.27.
- ³²⁸ See Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, (1996). p.40.
- ³²⁹ W. M. Starley, The Life and Inventions of James Starley, Father of the Cycle Industry, Coventry 1902. P. 19/20.
- ³³⁰ Wells, TTM, pp. 12-13.
- ³³¹ Buchli, 'Introduction' in Material Culture Reader, p.3.
- ³³² Ibid.
- ³³³ Handbook to the Prince Consort National Memorial, Published by authority of the Executive Committee. John Murray, London 1874 pp. 9-10.
- ³³⁴ Handbook to the Prince Consort National Memorial, p. 10.
- ³³⁵ Handbook to the Prince Consort National Memorial, p. 23.
- ³³⁶ From Henry Balfour, 'Introduction' in J.L. Myers (Ed.) Lt.Gen A. Lane Fox Pitt Rivers: The Evolution of Culture and Other Essays, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1906, p.V.
- ³³⁷ Anthropology was, until fairly recently, conceptualized as a discipline that took as its object the study of 'primitive' peoples and society. Debate in the 1960s and 70s, in which the term was viewed as pejorative, led to the gradual abandonment of this term by most practitioners of anthropology. This move also reflects the recognition that the gaze of anthropology is just as relevant when applied industrialized urban societies.
- ³³⁸ *Savage and barbaric*. The term *savage*, felt to be pejorative and ethnocentrically biased, was gradually replaced by *primitive* in anthropological use by the early twentieth century, before that too was phased out. It was a term in general use in the nineteenth century and was introduced as part of an evolutionary scheme of social types, introduced by the French Philosopher and social theorist Montesquieu (1689-1755). Although he advocated a form of cultural relativism, asserting that each society should be judged in terms of the conditions of its influence, he classified societies into three evolutionary stages: Savagery, Barbarism and Civilization. Barbarism was differentiated from savagery by the development of agriculture and pastoralism, as well as the existence of certain craft-based skills. The highest category, civilization, described complex societies with political organisations resembling state control, urban development, specialized labour functions and recognizably 'sophisticated' cultural traditions. Essentially the term focused on the idea of Euro-centric Christendom at the time of the Enlightenment.
- ³³⁹ Balfour, 'Introduction', p.XIV.
- ³⁴⁰ Balfour, 'Introduction', p.XIV/XV
- ³⁴¹ See Steven Jay Gould, Ever since Darwin, Pelican, Harmondsworth 1987. p.37:
 ...the father of evolutionary theory stood almost alone in insisting that organic change led only to increasing adaptation between organisms and their own environment and not to any abstract ideal of progress.
- ³⁴² Susan Buck-Morss describes the idea of social evolution as something that glorified a blind, empirical reading of the course of human history: 'It gave ideological support to the status quo by claiming that competitive capitalism expressed true human 'nature', that imperialist rivalries were the healthy result of an inevitable struggle for survival, and that ruling 'races' were justified as the dominators on the basis of 'natural' superiority. Within this pseudo-scientific discourse, the claim of social injustice became a logical impossibility.' See Susan Buck-Morss, The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project, MIT Press, Cambridge and London 1993, p.58/9.
- ³⁴³ Pitt Rivers in Myers (Ed.) Evolution of Culture, p.4.
- ³⁴⁴ Wells, TTM, p.108.
- ³⁴⁵ Linda Nead, Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2000. p.212.
- ³⁴⁶ Nead, Victorian Babylon, pp.212-214.
- ³⁴⁷ Nead, Victorian Babylon, p.214.
- ³⁴⁸ Parrinder, Shadows of the Future, p.85.
- ³⁴⁹ See Dan Smith, 'Hopeful Monsters: The Crystal Palace Dinosaurs', in Things, no.13, Winter 2000-01.
- ³⁵⁰ Wells, TTM, p.88.
- ³⁵¹ M. Christine Boyer, The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments, MIT, Cambridge and London, 1996. p.225.
- ³⁵² Boyer, City of Collective Memory, p.226.
- ³⁵³ Ibid..

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- ³⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁵⁶ Chris Brooks, Gothic Revival, Phaidon, London 1999, p.239.
- ³⁵⁷ He was influenced by recent designs from Germany, particularly by the work of Karl Frederick Schinkel and Christian Daniel Rausch, as well as by Pugin.
- ³⁵⁸ Gavin Stamp, 'George Gilbert Scott, the Memorial Competition, and the critics', in The Albert Memorial: The Prince Consort National Memorial: Its History, Contexts, and Conservation, edited by Chris Brooks, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 2000, p.102.
- ³⁵⁹ Yet there are realised architectural precedents for the Memorial that Scott identified, most notably the Eleanor Crosses. In 1840, Scott had made studies of the surviving Eleanor crosses at Geddington, Northampton and Waltham. These had been erected by Edward I at sites where Queen Eleanor's body had rested on its journey from Nottinghamshire to London. However, although drawing upon his knowledge of medieval architecture, Scott attempted to stress a sense of originality distinct from medieval influences, based upon a scale intended to emphasise the importance of the subject matter and a structural specificity of function.
- ³⁶⁰ Brooks, Gothic Revival. p.18.
- ³⁶¹ Parrinder, Shadows of the Future. p.85.
- ³⁶² Buck-Morss, Dialectics. p.58.
- ³⁶³ Buck-Morss, Dialectics. p.56.
- ³⁶⁴ Wells, TTM. pp.108-109.
- ³⁶⁵ Parrinder, Shadows of the Future. p.55.
- ³⁶⁶ Parrinder, Shadows of the Future. p.54.
- ³⁶⁷ Susan M. Pearce (Ed.) Interpreting Objects and Collections, Routledge, London and New York 1996. p.9.
- ³⁶⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁶⁹ Cited from an uncredited source in Patrick Beaver, The Crystal Palace, Phillimore, Chichester 1993. p.84.
- ³⁷⁰ C.A. Bell-Knight, The Crystal Palace: The Rise and Fall of the Biggest Ever Glass Container, C.A. Bell-Knight, London 1976. p.66
- ³⁷¹ See James Ryan, Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualisation of the British Empire, Reaktion, London 1997.
- ³⁷² Wells, TTM. pp.109-110.
- ³⁷³ Wells, TTM. p.110.
- ³⁷⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁷⁵ Wells, TTM. pp.113-114.
- ³⁷⁶ Wells, TTM. p.114.
- ³⁷⁷ Wells, TTM. pp.114-115.
- ³⁷⁸ Wells, TTM. p.151
- ³⁷⁹ Parrinder, Shadows of the Future. p.39.
- ³⁸⁰ Ibid.
- ³⁸¹ Parrinder, Shadows of the Future. pp.41/42.
- ³⁸² Parrinder, Shadows of the Future. p.42.
- ³⁸³ Wells, TTM. p.31.

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- ³⁸⁴ A.N. Wilson, The Victorians, Arrow Books, London 2003. p.164.
- ³⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁸⁶ Suvin, Metamorphoses, p.208.
- ³⁸⁷ Wells, TTM. p.1.
- ³⁸⁸ Wilson, The Victorians. p.164.
- ³⁸⁹ Wells, TTM. p.19.

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- ³⁹⁰ Jean Baudrillard, 'The Ecstasy of Communication' in Hal Foster (Ed.), Postmodern Culture, Pluto Press, London 1987. p. 128.
- ³⁹¹ He emphasises this point by referring to the actual satellization of a domestic interior inside of a lunar module.
- ³⁹² Baudrillard, 'The Ecstasy of Communication'. p.126.
- ³⁹³ Wells, TTM. p.28.
- ³⁹⁴ Wells, TTM. p.29.
- ³⁹⁵ Wells, TTM. p.28.
- ³⁹⁶ Wells, TTM. p.28.
- ³⁹⁷ Scott Bukatman, 'The Artificial Infinite', in Cooke and Woolen (Eds.) Visual Display: Culture Beyond Appearances Bay Press, Seattle 1995. p.255.
- ³⁹⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹⁹ Wells, TTM. p.1.
- ⁴⁰⁰ See Stover, The Time Machine: An Invention, pp.23/24.
- ⁴⁰¹ Wells, TTM. p.1.
- ⁴⁰² 'Paradox' has also come to serve as a general term relating to time travel in fiction, when an event from the future has an impact of the past - such as a time traveller changing history, the effects of which lead to something that has already happened, or else will change the time traveller's own period.
- ⁴⁰³ Wells, TTM. p.18.
- ⁴⁰⁴ Wells, TTM. p.66.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Wells, TTM. p.46.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Wells, TTM. pp.136-137.
- ⁴⁰⁷ Wells, TTM. p.141.
- ⁴⁰⁸ Wells, TTM. p.36.
- ⁴⁰⁹ Wells, TTM. pp.32-33.
- ⁴¹⁰ Wells, TTM. p.76.
- ⁴¹¹ Wells, TTM. pp.119-120.
- ⁴¹² Barbara Bender, 'Landscape and Politics'. p.135.
- ⁴¹³ Ibid.
- ⁴¹⁴ Wells, TTM. p.56.
- ⁴¹⁵ Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century, MIT Press, Cambridge and London, 1993. pp.112-113.
- ⁴¹⁶ Crary, Techniques of the Observer. p.113.
- ⁴¹⁷ E.E. Evans-Pritchard, 'Time is Not a Continuum', in Mary Douglas (Ed.), Rules and Meaning: The Anthropology of Everyday Knowledge, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1977.
- ⁴¹⁸ Wells, TTM. p.87.
- ⁴¹⁹ Wells, TTM. p.96-97.
- ⁴²⁰ Wells, TTM. pp.134-135.
- ⁴²¹ Wells, TTM. p.139.
- ⁴²² See Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny', in Art and Literature, Penguin, London 1990.
- ⁴²³ Wells, TTM. p.140.
- ⁴²⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴²⁵ Edmund Burke, cited in Jon Thompson, Sublime: The Darkness and the Light, Hayward Gallery Publishing, London 1999. p.22.
- ⁴²⁶ Wells, TTM. p.141.
- ⁴²⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴²⁸ Wells, TTM. p.56.
- ⁴²⁹ Wells, TTM. p.57.
- ⁴³⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴³¹ Even the Time Traveller's voice seems incompatibly coarse and vulgar, too harsh and deep. The Time Traveller's early observation of the difference of voice is of course part of an assertion of his own vital and civilized masculinity over these effete and decadent creatures. Their childlike gentleness inspired physical confidence, as did the observation that the Time Traveller could imagine himself flinging a dozen Eloi 'like nine-pins'. (Wells, TTM. p.38.)

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- Wells, *TTM*. p.38.
- ⁴³² Wells, *TTM*. p.51.
- ⁴³³ Wells, *TTM*. p.48.
- ⁴³⁴ Wells, *TTM*. p.50.
- ⁴³⁵ Wells. *Ibid*.
- ⁴³⁶ Wells, *TTM*. p.53.
- ⁴³⁷ Wells, *TTM*. p.54.
- ⁴³⁸ Wells, *TTM*. p.30.
- ⁴³⁹ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁴⁰ Wells, *TTM*. p.31.
- ⁴⁴¹ Parrinder, 1995. p.42.
- ⁴⁴² Wells, *TTM*. p.33.
- ⁴⁴³ The protagonist of J.K. Huysmans *À rebours (Against Nature)* (1884).
- ⁴⁴⁴ See Stover, *The Time Machine: An Invention*. p. 2.
- ⁴⁴⁵ Wells, *TTM*. p.62.
- ⁴⁴⁶ Wells, *TTM*. p.58.
- ⁴⁴⁷ Wells, *TTM*. p.62.
- ⁴⁴⁸ Wells, *TTM*. p.33.
- ⁴⁴⁹ Wells, *TTM*. pp.62-63.
- ⁴⁵⁰ Wells, *TTM*. p.63.
- ⁴⁵¹ Wells, *TTM*. pp.63-64.
- ⁴⁵² Wells, *TTM*. p.64.
- ⁴⁵³ Parrinder, *Shadows of the Future*. pp.42-43.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Parrinder, *Shadows of the Future*. pp.43-44.
- ⁴⁵⁵ Wells, *TTM*. p.47.
- ⁴⁵⁶ Wells, *TTM*. p.8.
- ⁴⁵⁷ Wells, *TTM*. p.47.
- ⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁵⁹ Wells, *TTM*. p.48.
- ⁴⁶⁰ Parrinder, *Shadows of the Future*. pp.36-37.
- ⁴⁶¹ Wells, *TTM*. p.49.
- ⁴⁶² *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁶³ Wells, *TTM*. p.50.
- ⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁶⁵ Wells, *TTM*. pp.50-51.
- ⁴⁶⁶ Wells, *TTM*. p.52.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Wells, *TTM*. p.40.
- ⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁶⁹ Wells, *TTM*. pp.40-41.
- ⁴⁷⁰ Wells, *TTM*. p.41.
- ⁴⁷¹ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁷² *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁷³ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁷⁴ Wells, *TTM*. p.42.
- ⁴⁷⁵ Wells, *TTM*. pp.41-42.
- ⁴⁷⁶ Wells, *TTM*. p.42.
- ⁴⁷⁷ Wells, *TTM*. p.59.
- ⁴⁷⁸ Wells, *TTM*. p.70.
- ⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid*.
- ⁴⁸⁰ Wells, *TTM*. pp.68-69.
- ⁴⁸¹ Wells, *TTM*. p.69.
- ⁴⁸² Wells, *TTM*. p.71.
- ⁴⁸³ Wells, *TTM*. pp.67-68.
- ⁴⁸⁴ Wells, *TTM*. p.77.
- ⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid*.

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- ⁴⁸⁶ Wells, *TTM*. pp.78-79.
⁴⁸⁷ Wells, *TTM*. p.82.
⁴⁸⁸ Wells, *TTM*. p.91.
⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.
⁴⁹⁰ Wells, *TTM*. p.92.
⁴⁹¹ Ibid.
⁴⁹² Ibid.
⁴⁹³ Wells, *TTM*. p.147.
⁴⁹⁴ Wells, *TTM*. pp.151-152.
⁴⁹⁵ Wells, *TTM*. p.149.
⁴⁹⁶ Wells, *TTM*. p.150.
⁴⁹⁷ Wells, *TTM*. pp.150-151.
⁴⁹⁸ Wells, *TTM*. p.143.
⁴⁹⁹ Wilson, *The Victorians*. p.539.
⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.
⁵⁰¹ Ibid.
⁵⁰² Wells, *TTM*. pp.111-112.
⁵⁰³ Wells, *TTM*. p.134.
⁵⁰⁴ Wells, *TTM*. pp.134-135.
⁵⁰⁵ Wells, *TTM*. p.137.
⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.
⁵⁰⁷ Wells, *TTM*. pp.137-138.
⁵⁰⁸ Wells, *TTM*. p.140.
⁵⁰⁹ Wells, *TTM*. p.141.
⁵¹⁰ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Routledge, London 1997. p.344.
⁵¹¹ Foucault, *The Order of Things*. p.387.

Notes for Chapter 6.

- ⁵¹² Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of Reading*, Reaktion, London 2004. p. 275. This brief account of reading aloud is informed by Fischer pp. 274-275.
⁵¹³ Walter Benjamin, 'The Storyteller: Reflections of the Work of Nikolai Leskov', in *Illuminations*, Fontana, London 1982. pp. 83-110.
⁵¹⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London 1997. p.115.
⁵¹⁵ Cited in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p.124. I have noticed that there is a small deviation between Spivak's translation of this cited passage and John and Doreen Weightman's translation of *Tristes Tropiques* on p.296 in which 'calabashes' reads as 'gourds'.
⁵¹⁶ Cited in Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. p.111.
⁵¹⁷ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. p.111.
⁵¹⁸ Claude Lévi-Strauss *Tristes Tropiques*, Penguin, London 1992. p.296.
⁵¹⁹ Ibid.
⁵²⁰ Ibid.
⁵²¹ Ibid.
⁵²² Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes*. p.298.
⁵²³ Ibid.
⁵²⁴ Ibid.
⁵²⁵ Derrida, *Grammatology*, p.127.
⁵²⁶ I have written elsewhere in more detail on *Capital*. See *Parachute*, April/May/June 2002, 'The secret of the gift: The movement of value in Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska's *Capital*'.
⁵²⁷ See opencongress.omweb.org
⁵²⁸ Christopher Tilley, *Material Culture and Text: The Art of Ambiguity*, Routledge, London and New York 1991. pp.16-17.

⁵²⁹ Tilley, Material Culture and Text, p.17.

⁵³⁰ Bjornar Olsen, 'Roland Barthes: From Sign to Text' in Christopher Tilley (Ed.), Reading Material Culture: Structuralism, Hermeneutics and Post Structuralism, Basil Blackwell, Oxford and Cambridge Mass 1990. p.164.

⁵³¹ Tony Bennet, 'The Exhibitionary Complex', in Greenber, Ferguson and Nairne (Eds.), Thinking About Exhibitions, Routledge, London and New York 1996. p.83.

⁵³² Shown at the Serpentine Gallery, London – almost literally in the shadow of Albert's memorial - 19 October 2005 – 8 January 2006. See illustrations pp.299-302.

⁵³³ Kabakov, 'In the Installations' in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Eds.) Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas, Blackwell, Malden and Oxford 2003. p.1175.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Kabakov, 'In the Installations', p.1176.

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

⁵³⁷ Kabakov, 'In the Installations'. pp.1176-77.

⁵³⁸ Kabakov, 'In the Installations'. p.1178.

⁵³⁹ As pointed out by Rod Mengham in 'Agents and Patients', Ilya and Emilia Kabakov: The House of Dreams, Serpentine Gallery, London 2005. p.22.

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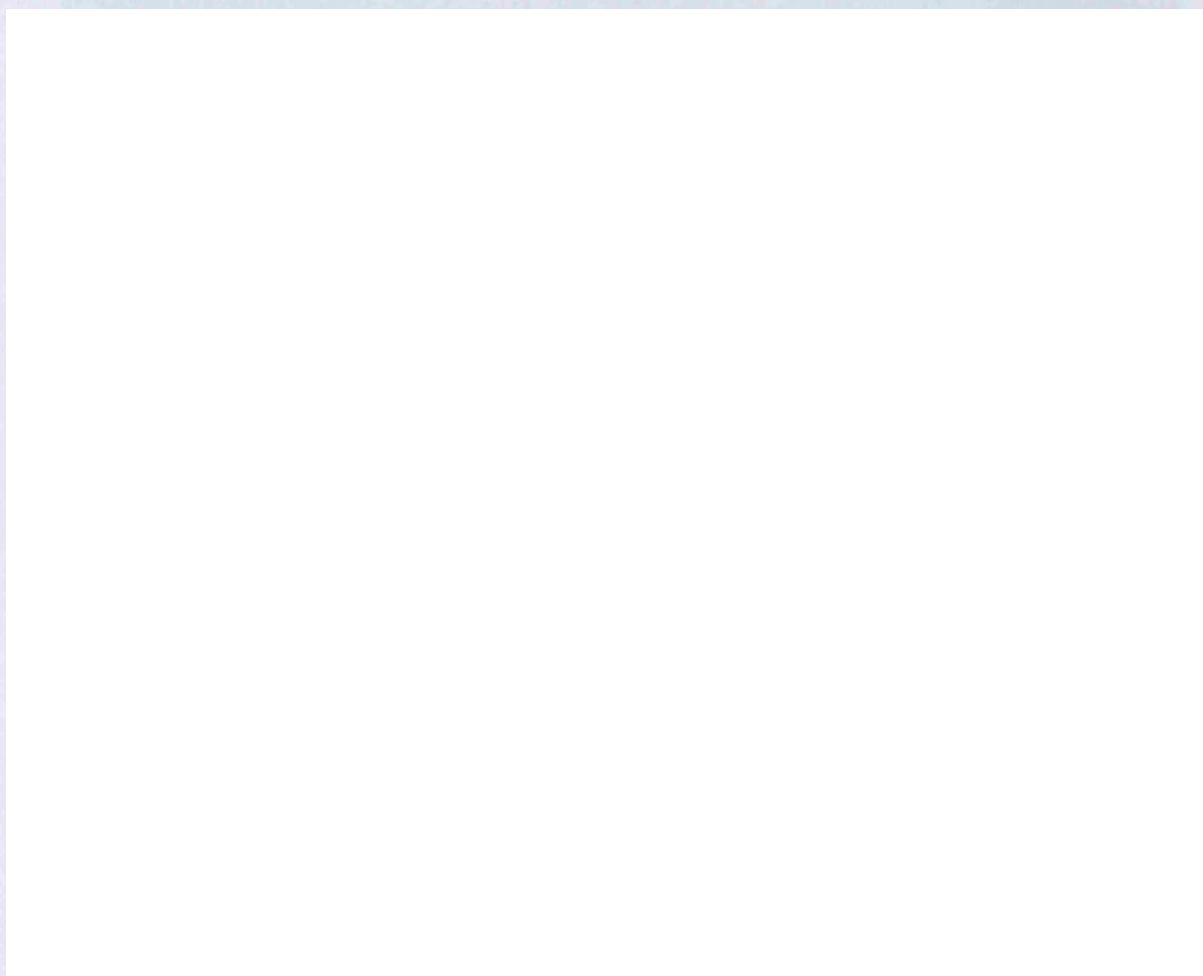
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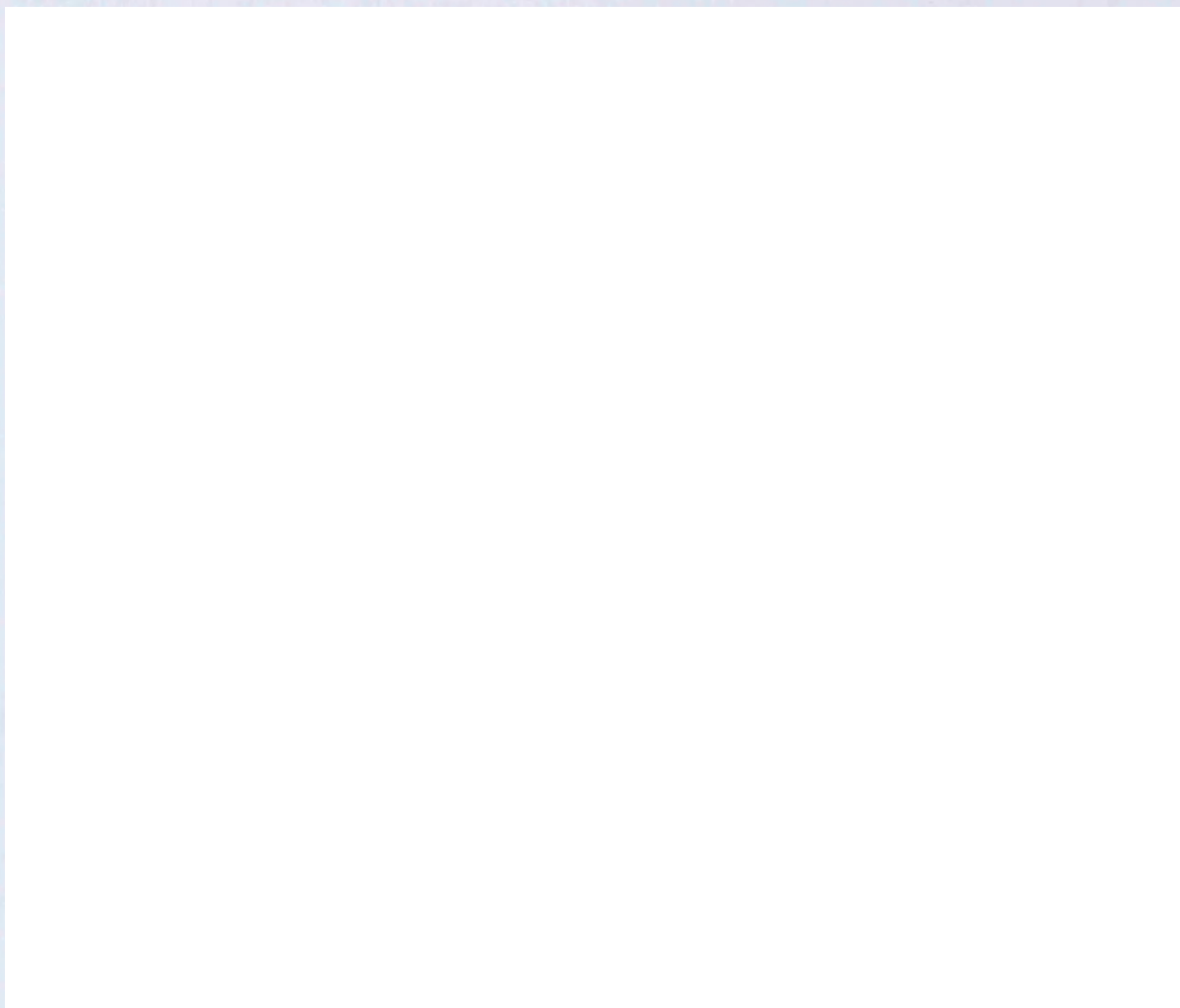
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Illustrations

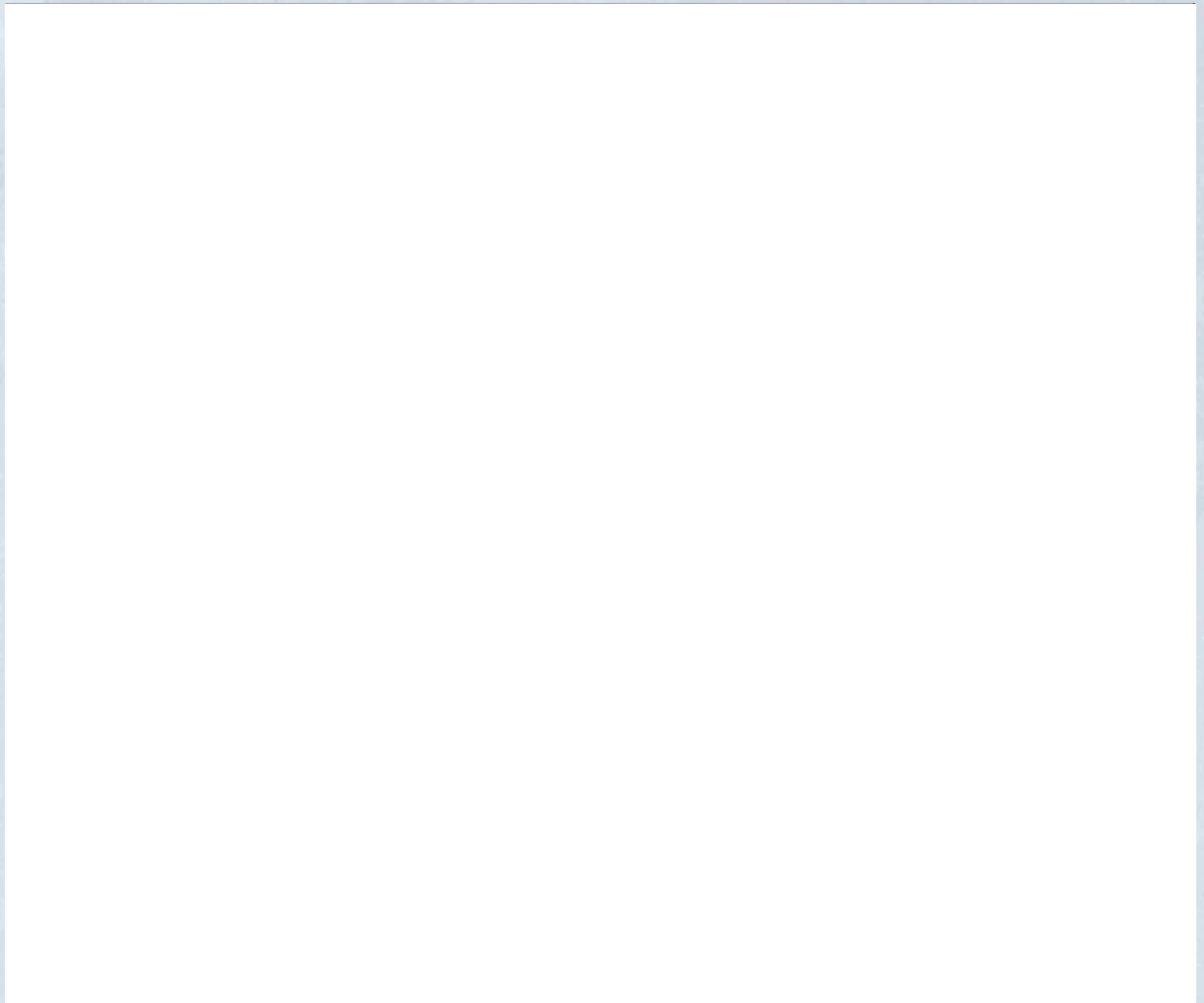


Gallery, London.

Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, *The House of Dreams* 2005. Installation at the Serpentine Gallery, London.



Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, *The House of Dreams* 2005. Installation at the Serpentine Gallery, London.



Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, *The House of Dreams* 2005. Installation at the Serpentine Gallery, London.



Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, *The House of Dreams* 2005. Drawing for installation at the Serpentine Gallery, London.